1
STORY BY
JUNICHI FUJISAKU
ART BY
YUKI YOSHIMOTO
BASED ON THE GHOST IN THE SHELL BY
SHIROW MASAMUNE
THE GHOST IN THE SHELL
攻殻機動隊
THE HUMAN ALGORITHM

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KAW
KAW
NO DUMPING
TOWADA CO-OP
SPLRK

01
SECTION 9

FLAP

THE FUTURE
IS UPON US.
CAN YOU SEE IT?

CLAMOR

CLAMOR

WE ARE TOLD THAT ALL LIVING ORGANISMS EVOLVE TO FIT THEIR ENVIRON-MENTS.

WHEN WILL **WE** ACHIEVE **OUR** PERFECT FORM...

...NO LONGER HINDERED BY ACCIDENT OR DISEASE?

WHAT, THEN, OF HUMAN EVOLU-TION?

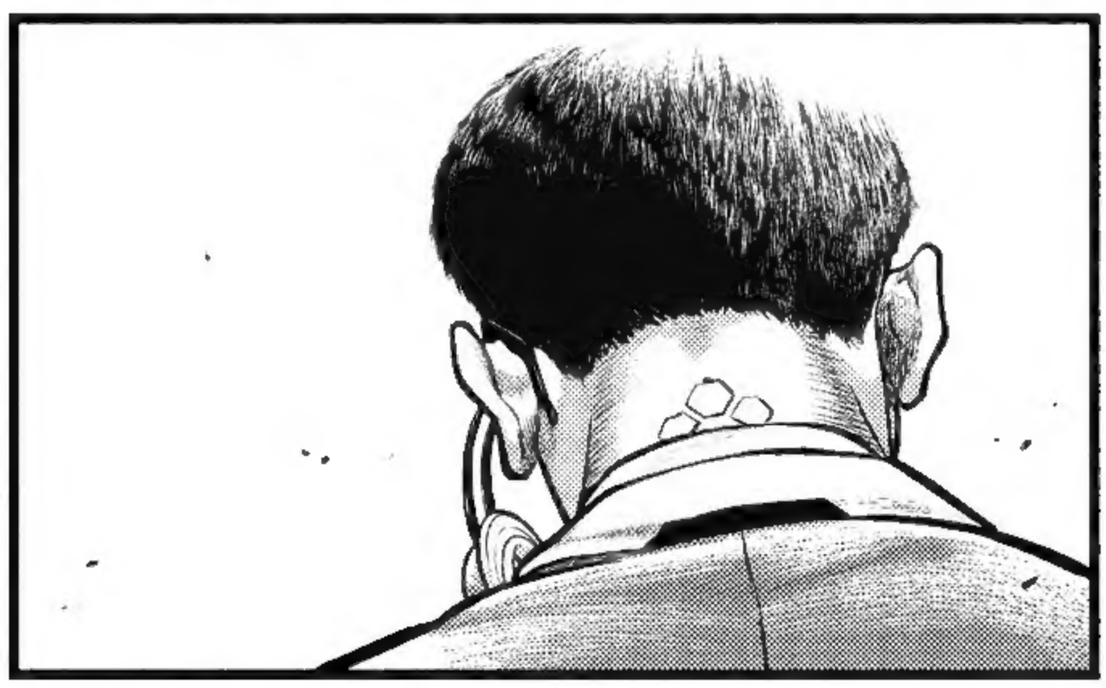
THE PROSTHETIC BODY IS THE NEXT STEP IN HUMAN EVOLUTION!
THAT, MY FRIENDS, IS THE FUTURE PROMISED BY PROS-THETICS.
HUR-
-RAH!
WE'RE COUNT-ING ON YOU!
SHOW US THE WAY, MIKO-MOTO!
YOU'RE THE BEST, COUN-CILOR!
WHOOOO
LEAD THE CHARGE! PROS-THETICS FOR ALL!
A ROUSING ADDRESS FROM OUR VERY OWN CITY COUNCILOR SHINRA MIKOMOTO.
HOW ABOUT THAT, LADIES AND GETLE-MEN?

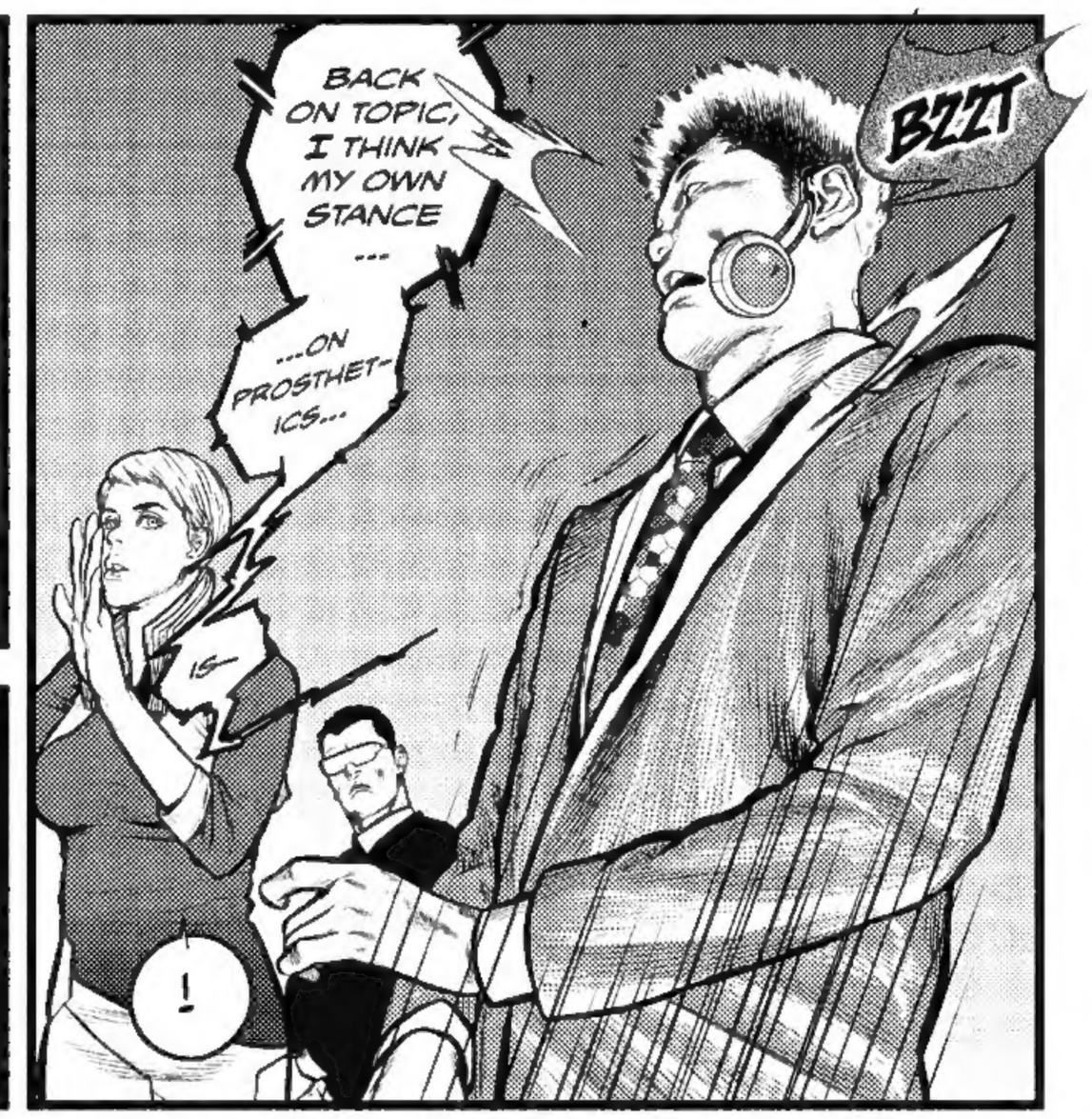
WHOOOOO

OF COURSE, THE ONLY FUTURE I CAN SEE IS A LIFE SPENT WAITING ON MY WIFE HAND AND FOOT.

HYUK HYUK... はは...

AND WHAT A RESPONSE! TRULY, THE COUNCILOR IS JUST THE RAY OF HOPE OUR CITY NEEDS.





SNAP
EEEEEEEEK!
WHUMP
COUN-
CILOR!
TAKE
HIM
DOWN!

RUN, BEFORE WE ALL GET KILLED!
WE GOTTA GET OUTTA HERE!
AAAHHH!
BZZT
EEK
BZZT
IS THIS A TER-RORIST ATTACK ?!
BZZT

COUNCILOR! COME WITH ME!
OK
FWIP

GRAAAHH
THERE'S MORE OF 'EM?!

NGH...
GHH...
GRRRRAAAAAAAAAAAAHHH
!

STOP MIKO-MOTO-OO!
NO MORE PROS-THET-ICS!
GRAAAAHH
EAT THIS!
CRACK
SHIT! THEY'RE HEADED FOR THE STAGE—
THE HELL IS GOING ON?!

慢走 SLOW
1 出口 EXIT
HURRY!
SLAM
THIS WAY, COUN-CILOR!
A2
GRAAH
EXIT
SKREECH

STOP MIKO-MOTO-OOO!

BI

47

DMP

OH, GOD...

ACK!

FLOAT

KA-

WHAM

THMP

WHUD

SKREEEEEEE

WAS I JUST *FLOAT-ING?!*

WHAT THE...?

ARE YOU OKAY ?!

?!

CRASH!!

YRAA AUGH HHHHH!!

GRAAAHH
HALT!
THIS IS YOUR FINAL WARNING!
HALT OR I'LL SHOOT!

DAMN !!!

ZWIP

THE HELL ?!
SKRRSH
GRAAH
NGH ...
WHERE ...
WHERE DID THAT SHOT COME FROM?
SHWWW
...A MATEBA?!
HALT! HALT OR I'LL SHOOT!
SHIT! STILL GOT TWO LEFT!
HUH? THAT GUN...
IS THAT ...
WHAT NOW ?!
SHWWW

SHWWWM...

BLAM
BLAM
BLAM
SKKRRT

SHWWW

ROGER!

NGH ...

TAK

FUCHI-KOMA.

GET THE ASSAILANTS PATCHED UP AND RESTRAINED, THEN TAKE THEM INTO CUSTODY.

ARE THEY WITH SECTION 9?

THAT'S THERM-OPTIC CAMO...

I'M JUST GLAD YOU DON'T WEIGH TOO MUCH, COUNCILOR.

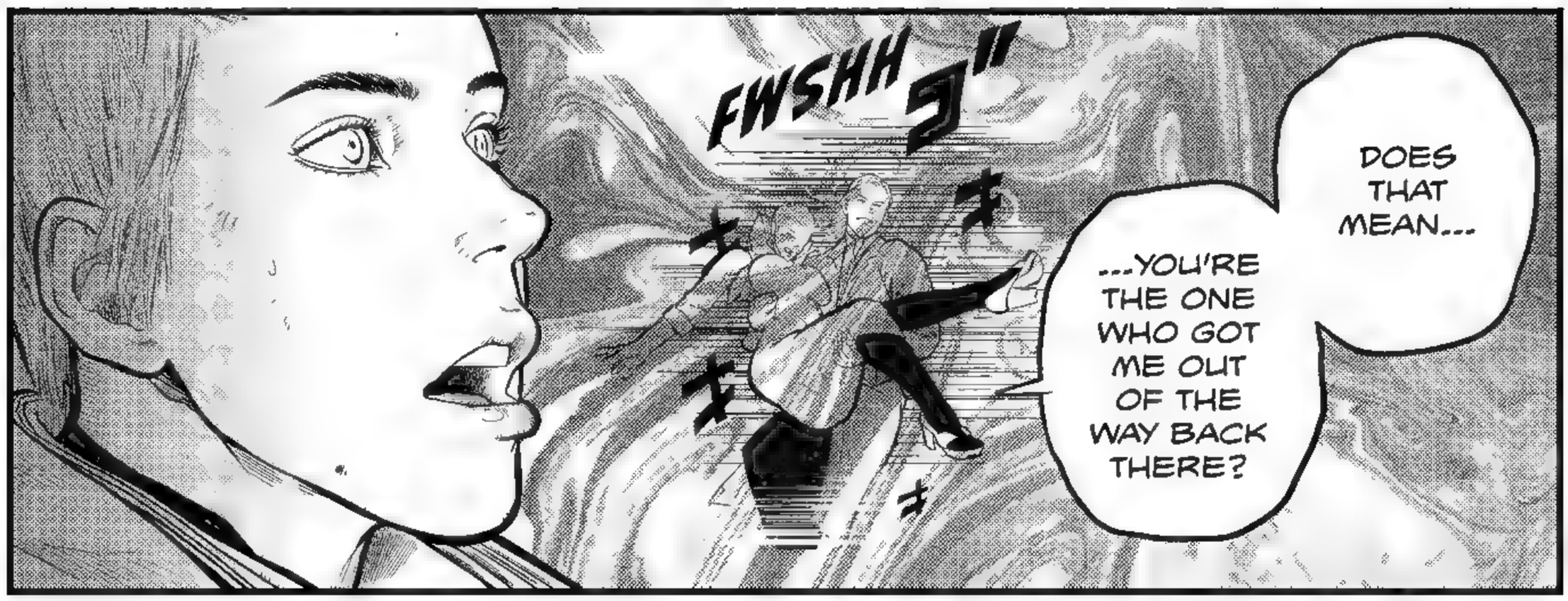
EXIT

ZOOOOOM

SHWIK

PHEW. THAT WAS CLOSE.

HUH?


FWSHH
DOES THAT MEAN...
...YOU'RE THE ONE WHO GOT ME OUT OF THE WAY BACK THERE?

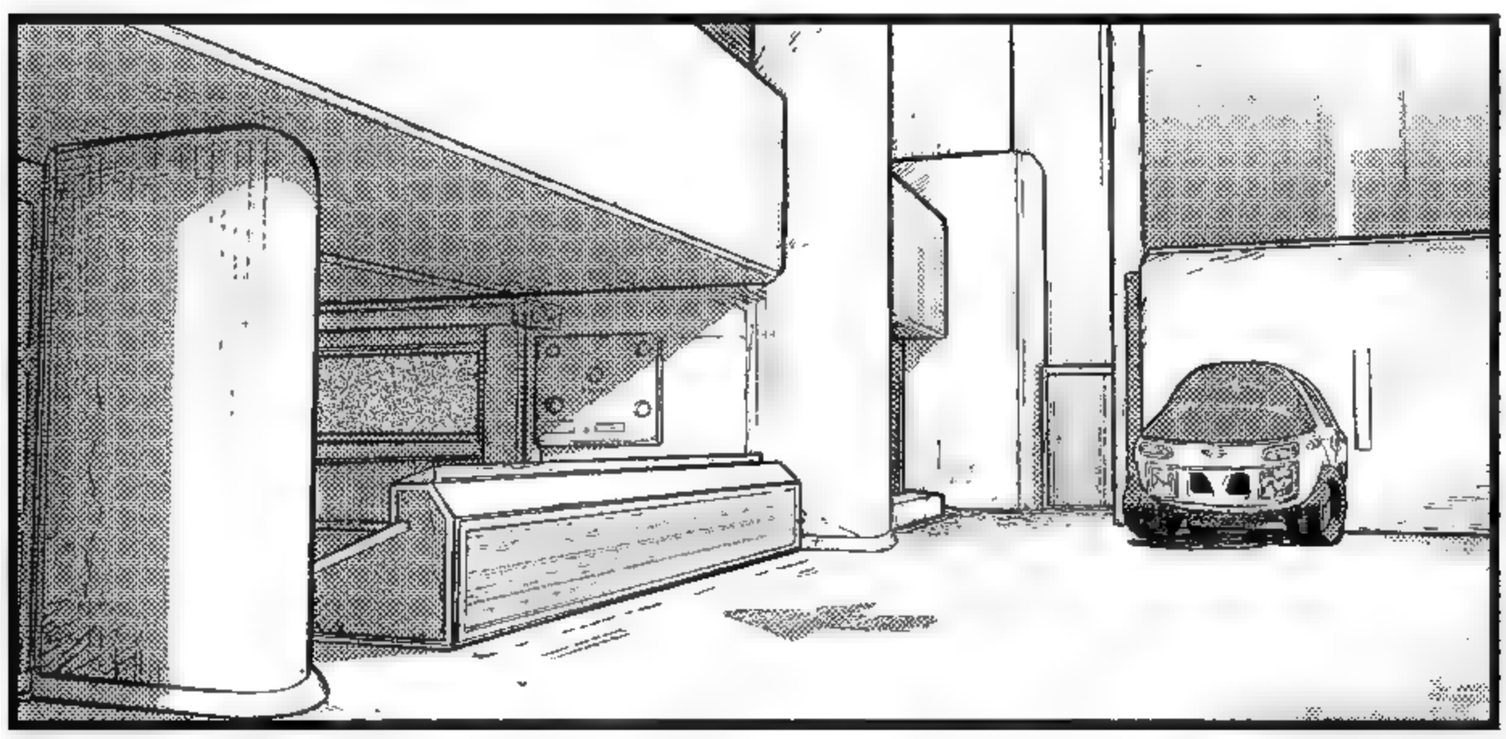
ANYWAY, I DOUBT THIS IS THE END. NO TELLING WHEN THEY'LL STRIKE NEXT.
WE'LL ARRANGE AN ESCORT FOR YOU, SO PLEASE HEAD TO THE HOSPITAL.
I WILL! THANK YOU!

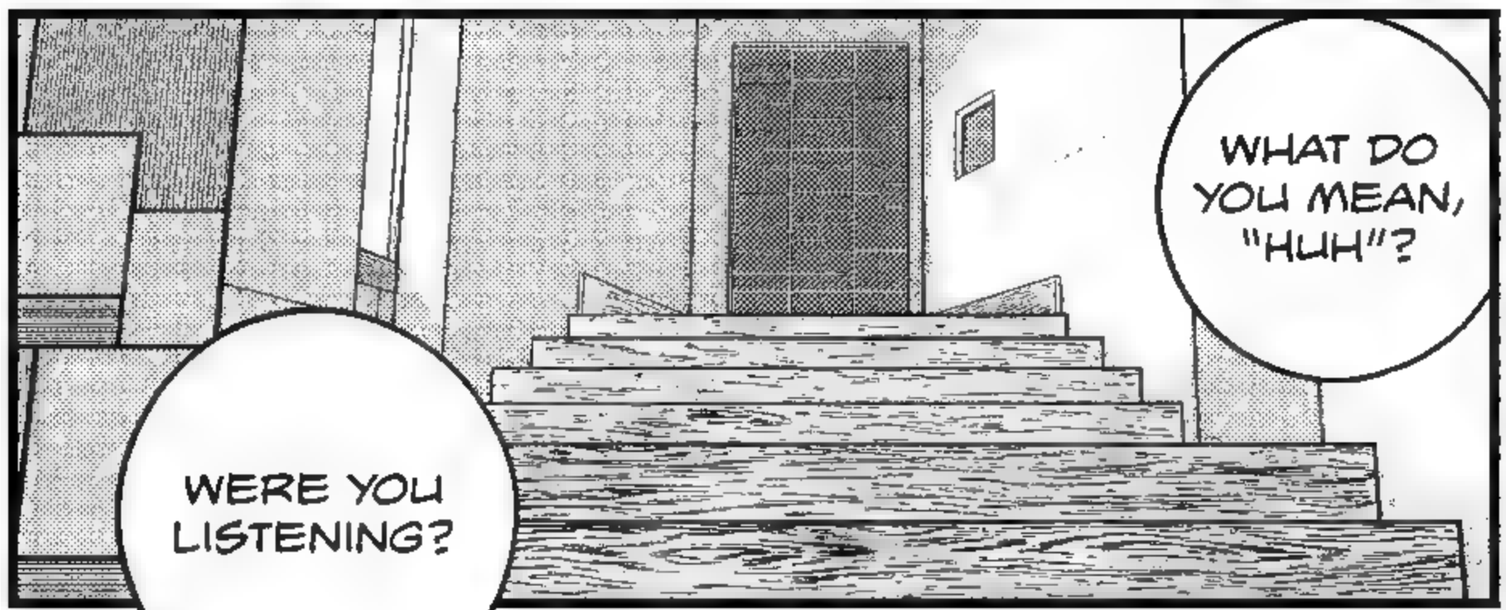
DON'T GIVE ME TOO MUCH CREDIT. IF I'D DONE MY JOB PROPERLY, YOU WOULDN'T HAVE THAT INJURY.

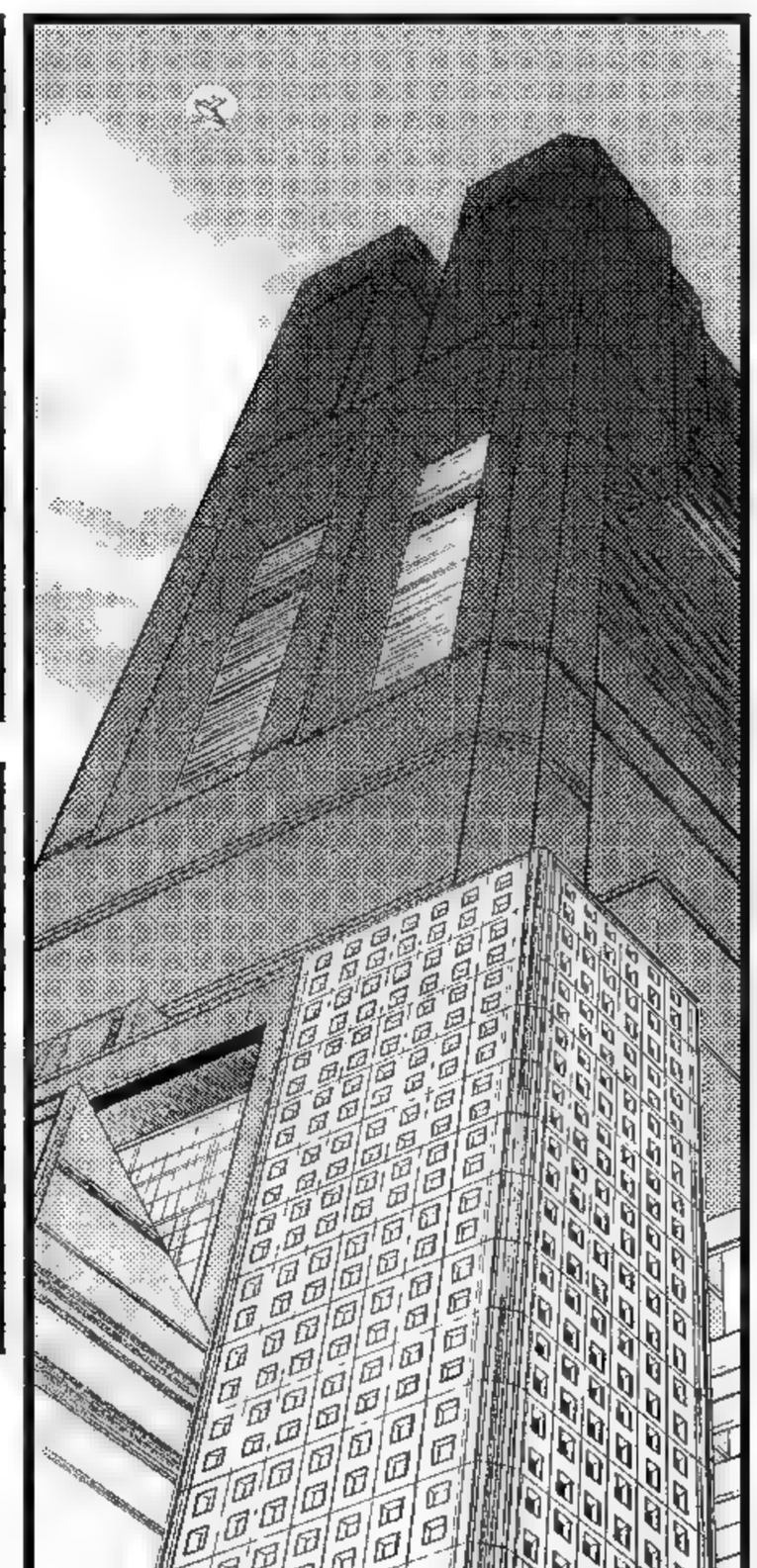
SIR!
I DID EVERYTHING BY THE BOOK, SIR!
FWIP
POINT
A WORD ON PROTO-COL WHEN YOU'RE ABOUT TO SHOOT.
AND AS FOR YOU!

NEXT TIME, DON'T HESITATE.

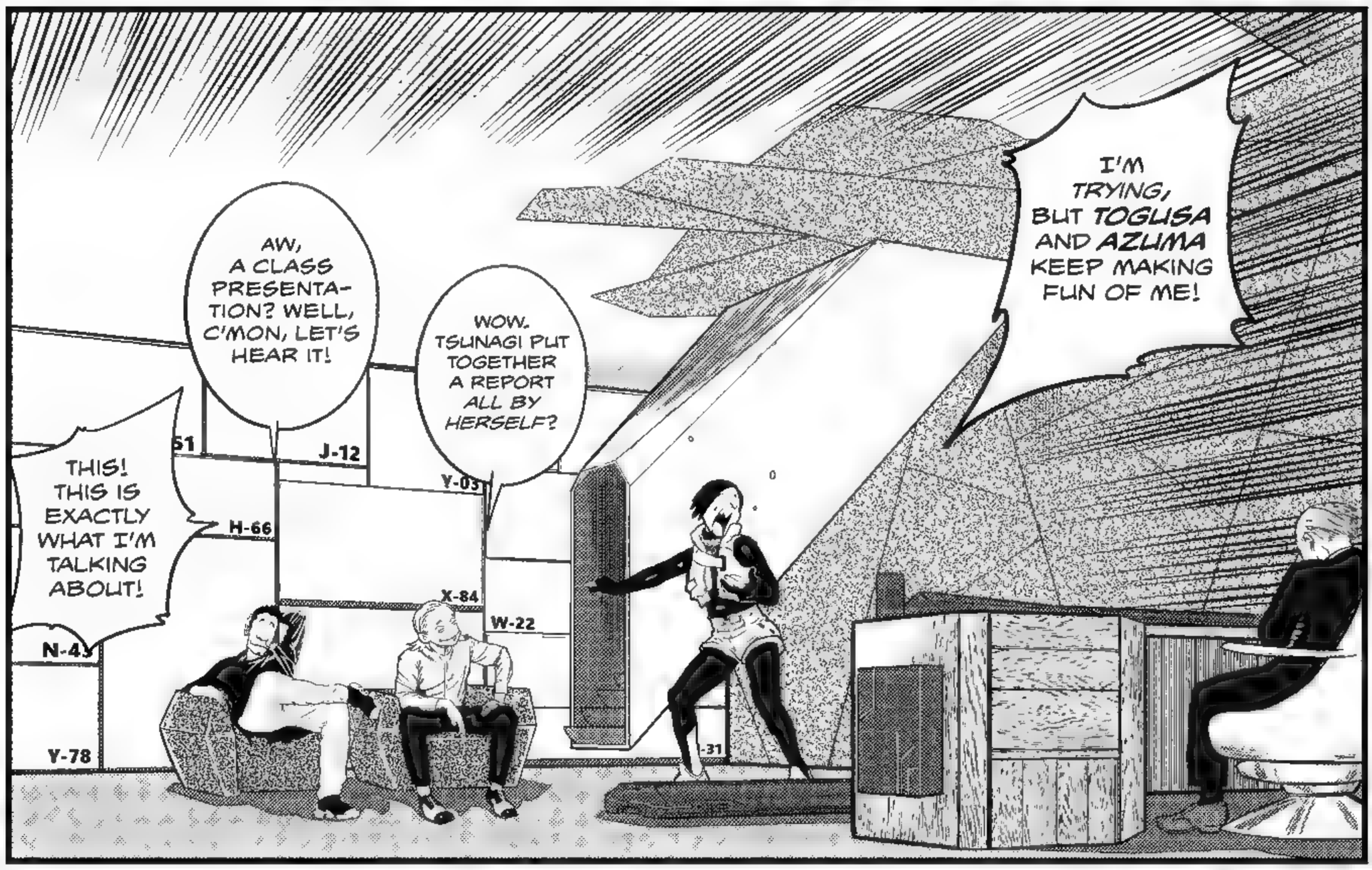
HUH?



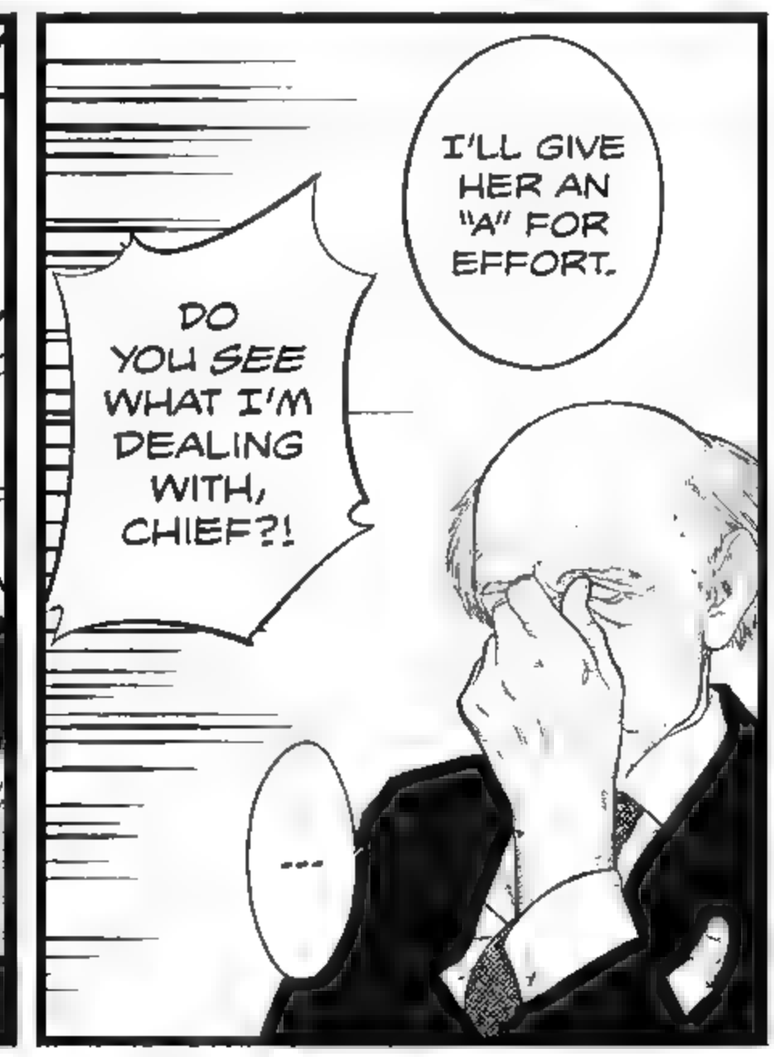




GET ON WITH IT, TSUNAGI.
THE CASE REPORT.

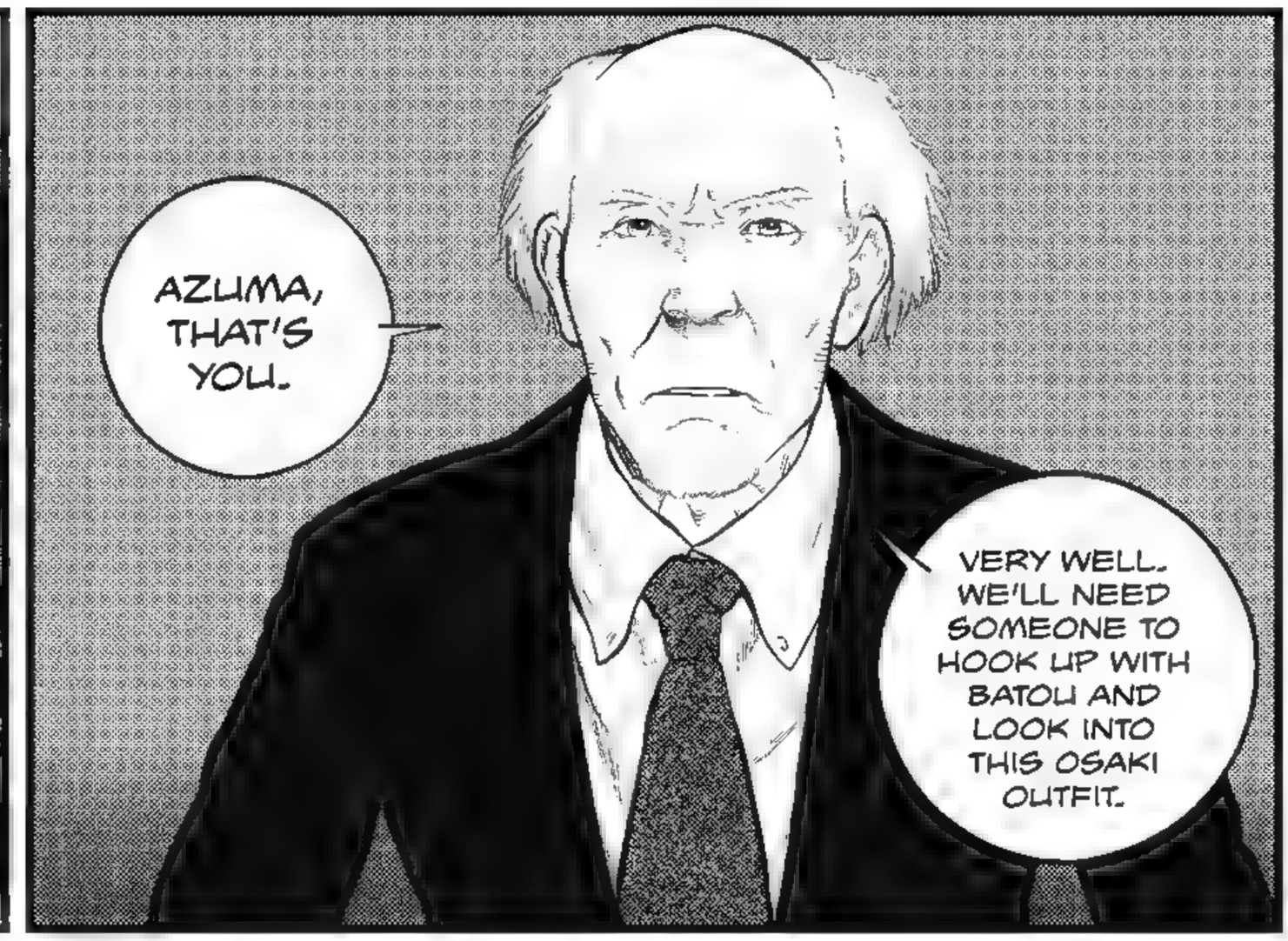

AW, A CLASS PRESENTATION? WELL, C'MON, LET'S HEAR IT!
WOW. TSUNAGI PUT TOGETHER A REPORT ALL BY HERSELF?
I'M TRYING, BUT TOGUSA AND AZUMA KEEP MAKING FUN OF ME!
THIS! THIS IS EXACTLY WHAT I'M TALKING ABOUT!
J-12
Y-03
H-66
X-84
W-22
N-43
Y-78

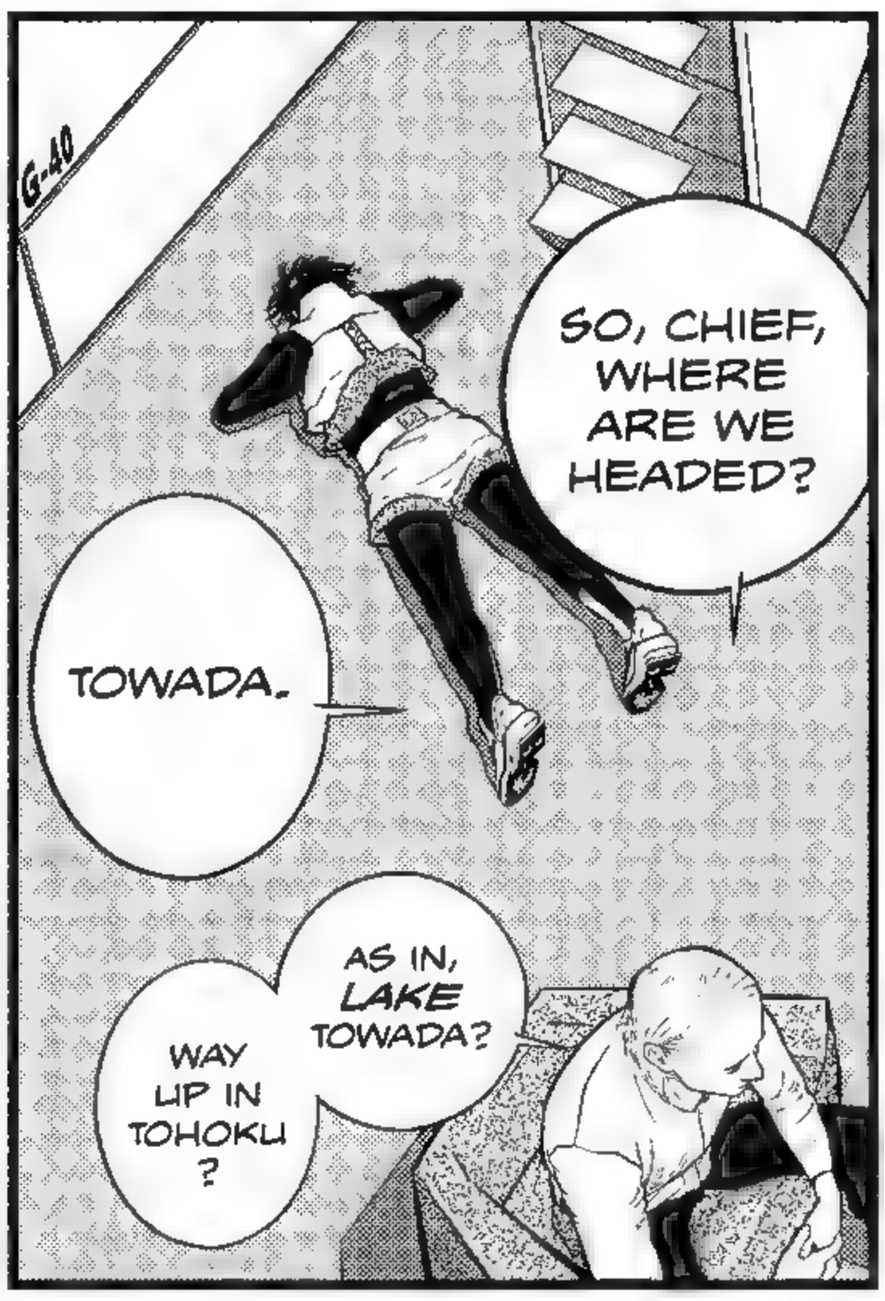
JUST SIT THERE AND BE QUIET!
CLARE
CUT THE CRAP ALREADY!
WE GOT IT. SHEESH.
YEAH, YEAH.


I'LL GIVE HER AN "A" FOR EFFORT.
DO YOU SEE WHAT I'M DEALING WITH, CHIEF?!
...

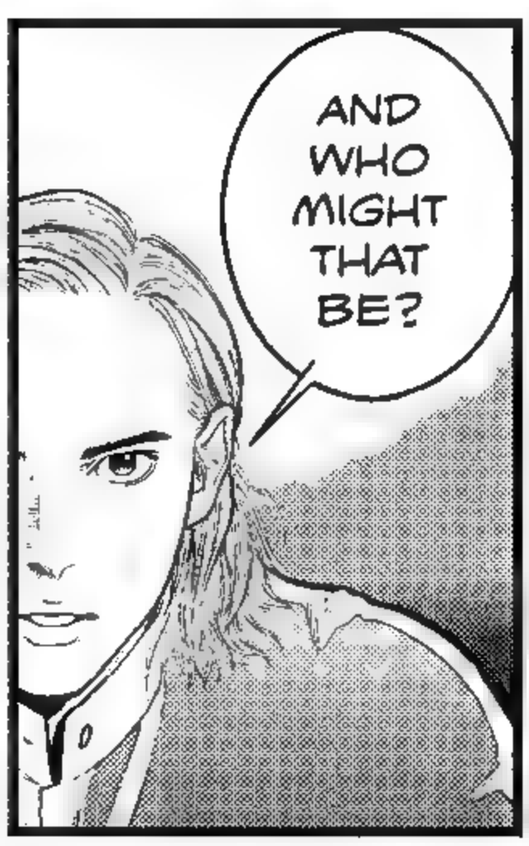
SEVERAL CYBERNETIC BRAINS WERE HIJACKED AND USED TO CARRY OUT THE ATTACK.
THE ATTEMPT ON SHINRA MIKOMOTO'S LIFE INVOLVED MULTIPLE GHOST-HACKS.
OKAY. I'M JUST GONNA START!
STILL NO CLUE AS TO WHO WAS PULLING THE STRINGS. BUT THE HACKED INDIVIDUALS' PROSTHETICS WERE ALL OF THE SAME TYPE-29 DESIGN.
...AND THAT LED US TO ONE "OSAKI HEAVY INDUSTRIES," A PROSTHETICS MANUFACTURER OPERATING OUT OF THE ARTIFICIAL ISLANDS DOWN SOUTH.
FLICK
MAP
WE TOOK A LOOK AT INSPECTION RECORDS FOR TYPE-29 BODIES...

OH, DON'T START WITH ME!
LOVED THE TWIST AND THE FLICK AT THE END!
HAH!
BRAVA!
THAT'S ALL WE'VE GOT SO FAR.


AZUMA, THAT'S YOU.
VERY WELL. WE'LL NEED SOMEONE TO HOOK UP WITH BATOU AND LOOK INTO THIS OSAKI OUTFIT.

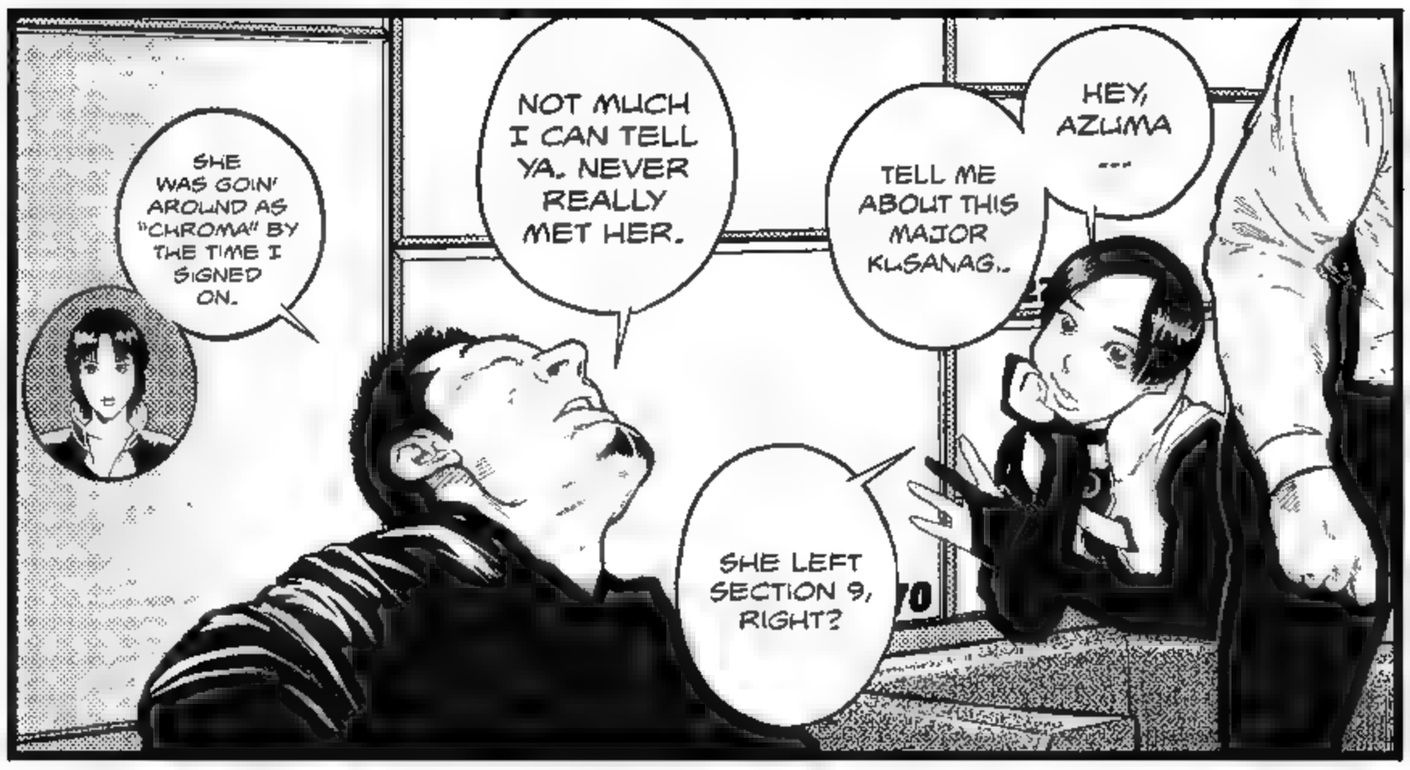

G-40
SO, CHIEF, WHERE ARE WE HEADED?
TOWADA.
AS IN, LAKE TOWADA?
WAY UP IN TOHOKU ?

TOGUSA AND TSUNAGI, YOU'LL BE TAKING CARE OF ANOTHER MATTER.
WHAT ?!
YOU'RE PUTTING ME WITH TOGUSA ?!
SORRY TO DIS-APPOINT.
SOUTH-ERN ISLAND GETAWAY.
BETTER GET ME AN ALOHA SHIRT. ♡

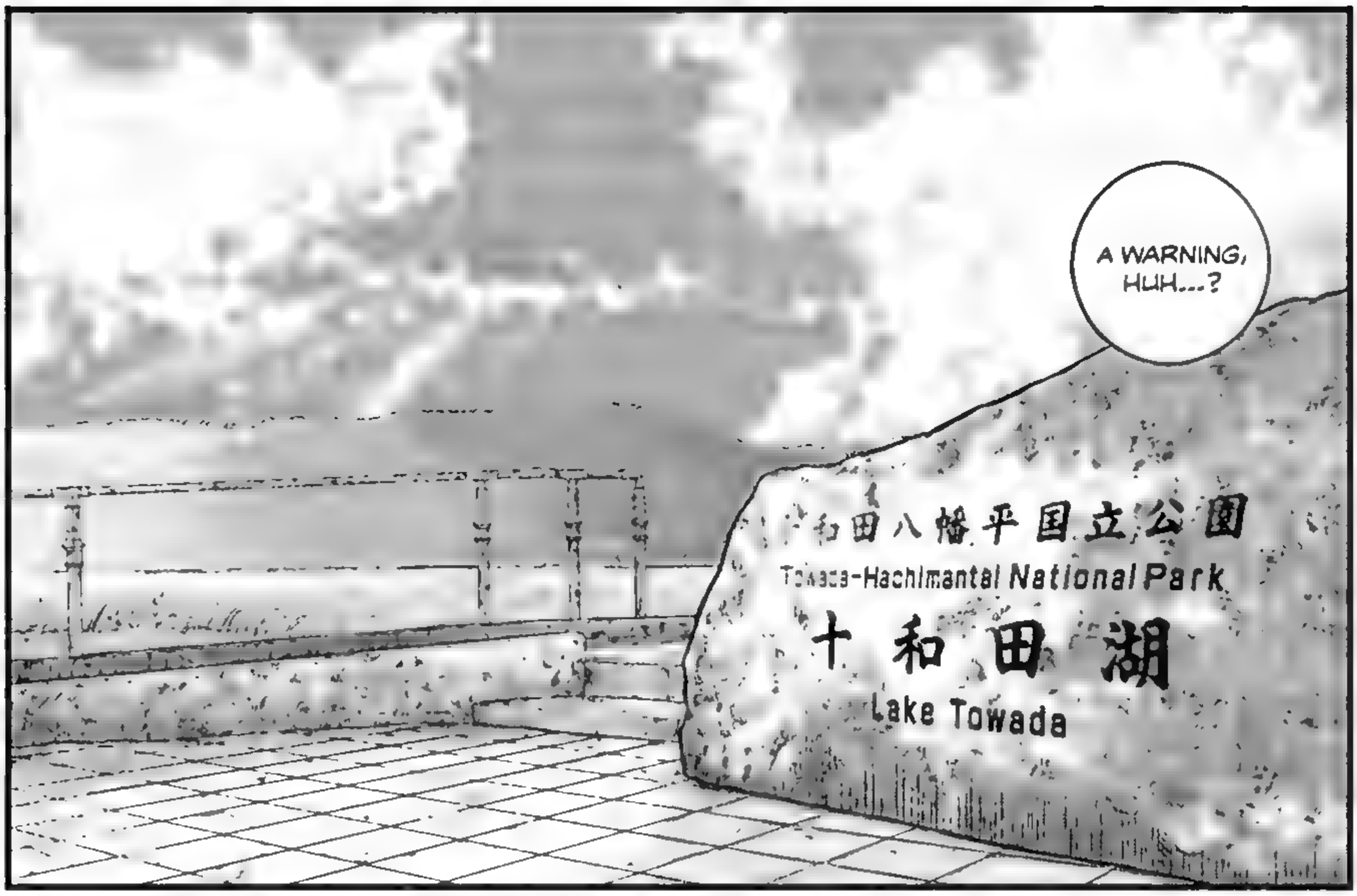

AND WHO MIGHT THAT BE?

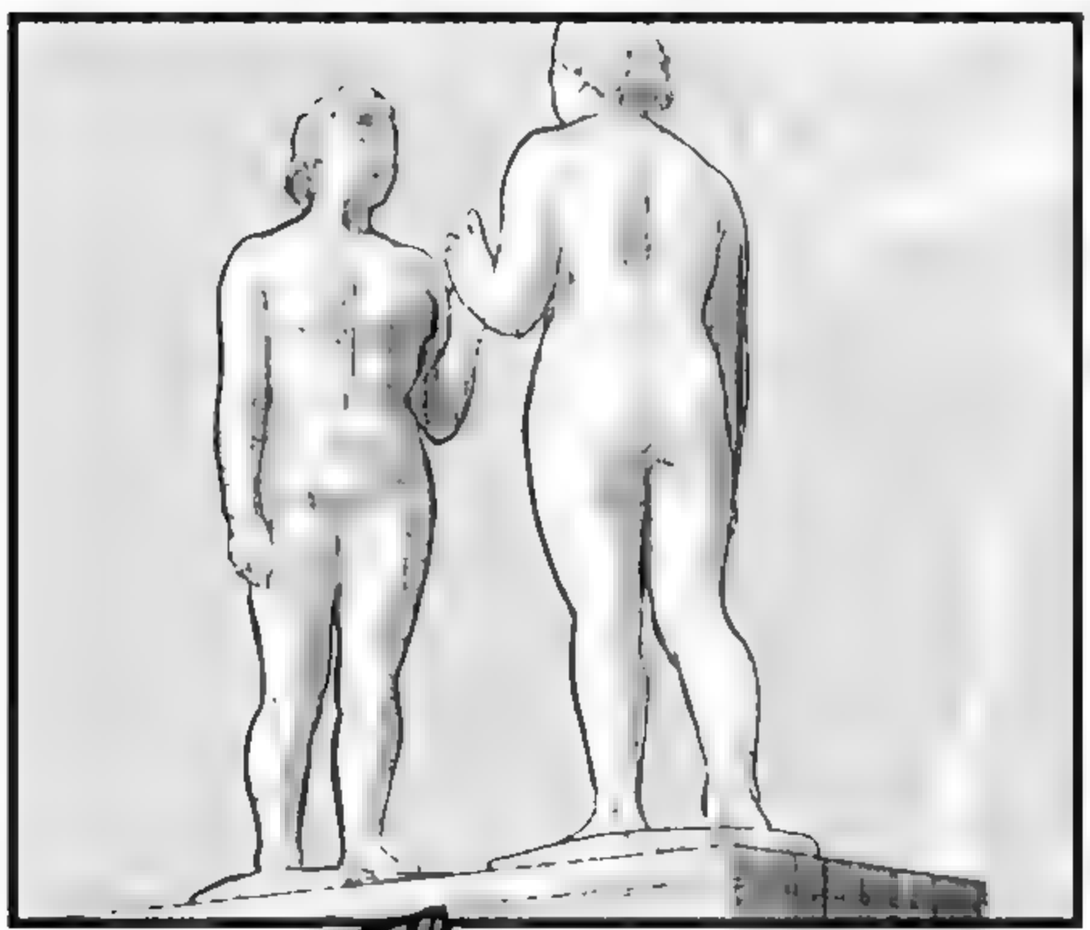
WHEN IDS WERE RUN ON THE BODIES, A FAMILIAR NAME HAPPENED TO TURN UP.
THAT'S CORRECT. A CONSID-ERABLE QUANTITY OF PROSTHETIC BODIES WAS FOUND ILLEGALLY DUMPED IN THE AREA.

MOTOKO KUSANAGI.



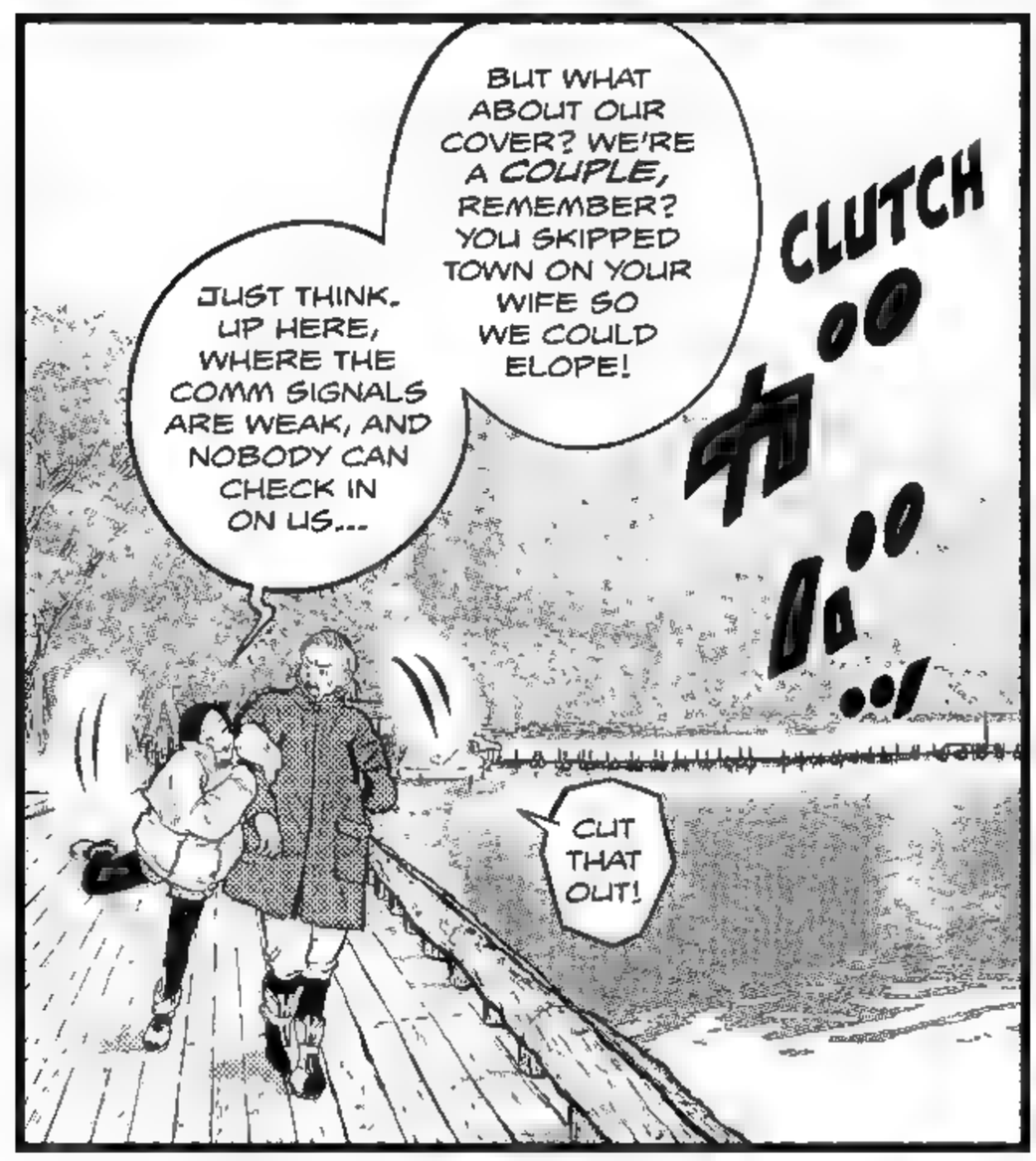
AND BATOU?
HE'S YET TO BE IN-FORMED.
FOR HIM, THE DISCOV-ERY IS LIKELY TO ELICIT TOO MANY PERSONAL FEELINGS.
MO-TOKO !!!
FRSPLSH
...
WHACK
...AND THE INFORMA-TION MUST NOT LEAVE SECTION 9.
BATOU IS NOT TO HEAR OF THIS...
E-51
J-12
X-84
N-43
I FIND IT HARD TO BELIEVE THE MAJOR IS DEAD. BUT THE FACT THAT SHE'S LEFT A TRACE FOR US TO FIND...
THIS INVESTIGA-TION IS TO BE CON-DUCTED WITH THE UTMOST DISCRETION, HANDLED BY US ALONE.
...MAY BE HER ATTEMPT AT WARNING US.

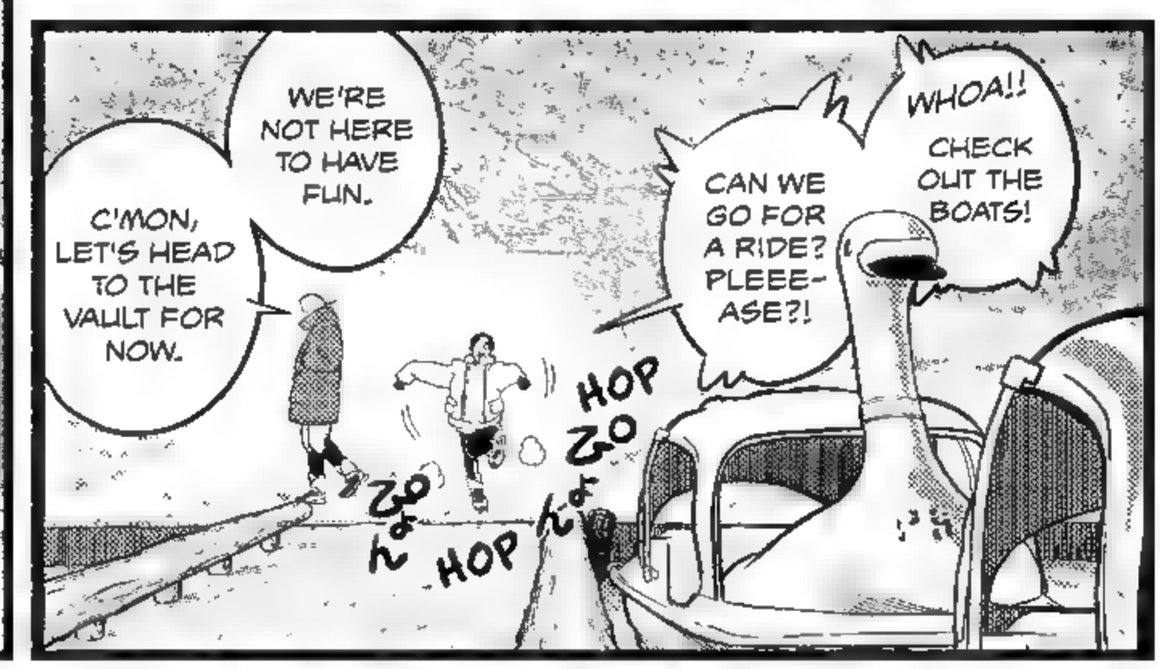

A WARNING, HUH...?
十和田八幡平国立公園
Towada-Hachimantai National Park
十和田湖
Lake Towada



AH-CHOO!

HOW DO PEOPLE LIVE UP HERE?!
SHIVER SHIVER
FWOOOSH!
IT'S FREEZ-ING!


BUT WHAT ABOUT OUR COVER? WE'RE A COUPLE, REMEMBER? YOU SKIPPED TOWN ON YOUR WIFE SO WE COULD ELOPE!
JUST THINK. UP HERE, WHERE THE COMM SIGNALS ARE WEAK, AND NOBODY CAN CHECK IN ON US...
CLUTCH
CUT THAT OUT!

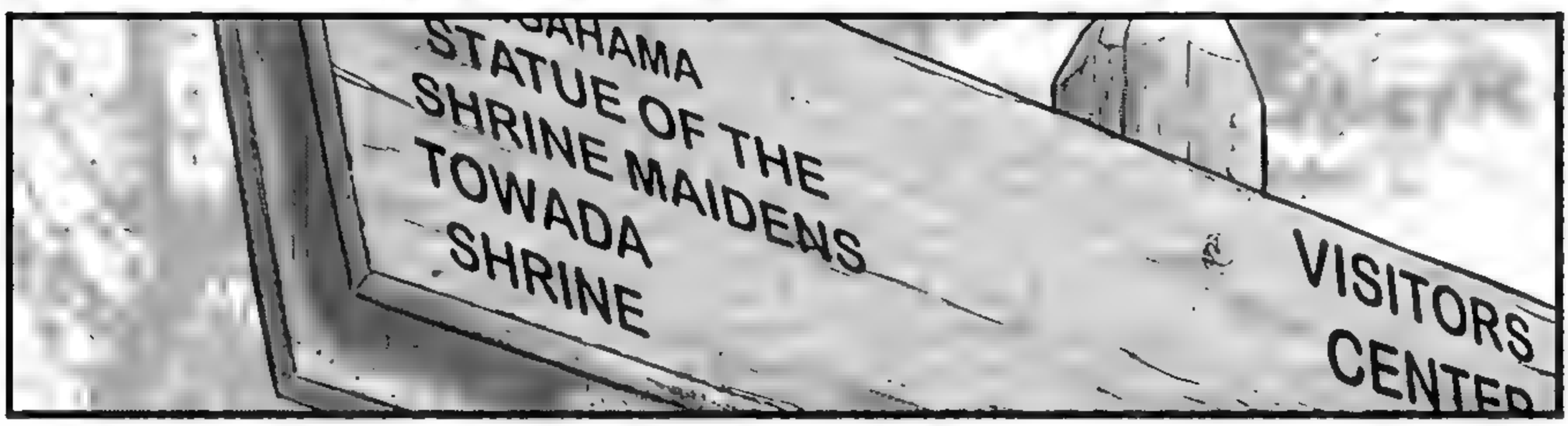

C'MON, LET'S HEAD TO THE VAULT FOR NOW.
WE'RE NOT HERE TO HAVE FUN.
CAN WE GO FOR A RIDE? PLEEE-ASE?!
WHOA!! CHECK OUT THE BOATS!
HOP
HOP

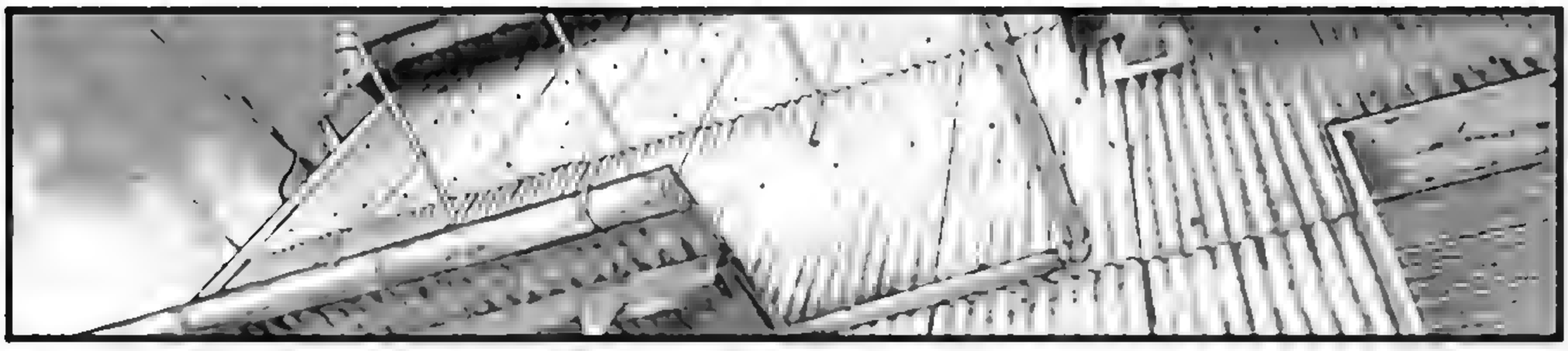
...WE CAN GO TOTALLY OFF THE GRID.

GEEZ. SEEMS LIKE THE CHIEF WAS SCRAPING THE BOTTOM OF THE BARREL FOR RECRUITS.
KRNCH
KRNCH

DO ME A FAVOR AND GO ILLEGALLY DUMP YOUR COVER STORY.
!
PLUCK

HMPH.
I GUESS THIS IS WHAT THEY MEAN WHEN THEY SAY MARRIED GUYS...
...HAVE NO SENSE OF ROMANCE!


STATUE OF THE SHRINE MAIDENS
TOWADA SHRINE
VISITORS CENTER



CLICK
CHECK OUT THE JOINTS FOR THE SYNTHETIC MUSCLE. PRETTY SHODDY WORK.
IS THIS REALLY HER? I WOULD'VE PEGGED HER FOR HAVING WAY NICER HARD-WARE.
HMM...

WOOOW. SO THIS IS THE LEGENDARY MAJOR.
NICE TO PUT A FACE TO THE NAME.

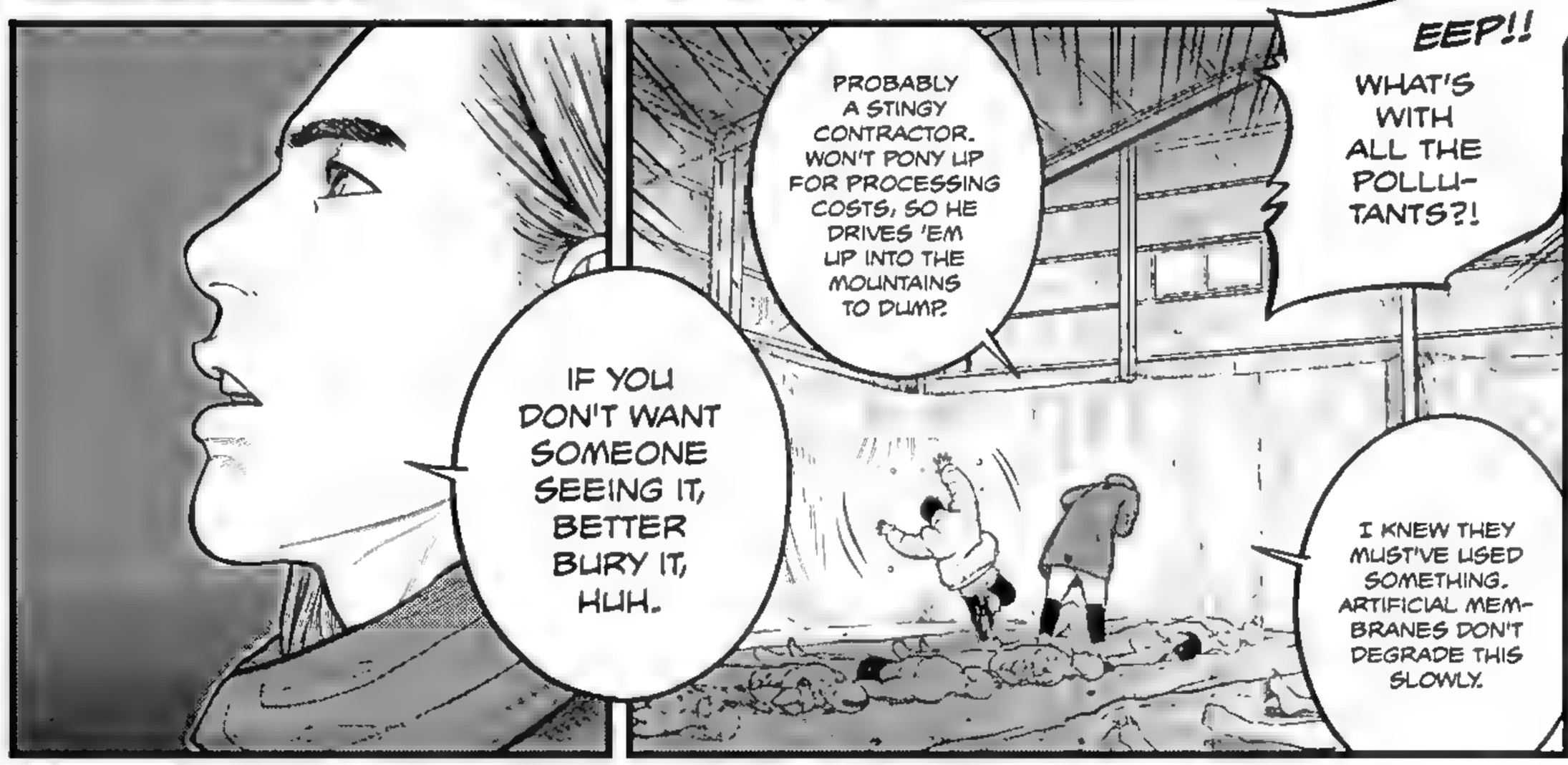
...BUT MOST OF THIS STUFF IS A MIX OF HASTY MODS AND STRAIGHT-UP JUNK.
'SPECIALLY THE LIMBS.
THESE ARE THE KINDA PARTS YOU FIND FLOATING AROUND THE BLACK MARKET FOR NEXT TO NOTHING.
I MEAN, WHEN THE CHIEF SAID A BUNCH OF PROSTHETICS HAD BEEN DUMPED, I FIGURED IT'D BE BAD...

TAKE A LOOK.
YOU'RE NOT WRONG. BUT THERE'S MORE TO THE STORY — A REASON THESE THINGS WERE DUMPED ILLEGALLY.

SNAP
WHRR WHIIIRRR...

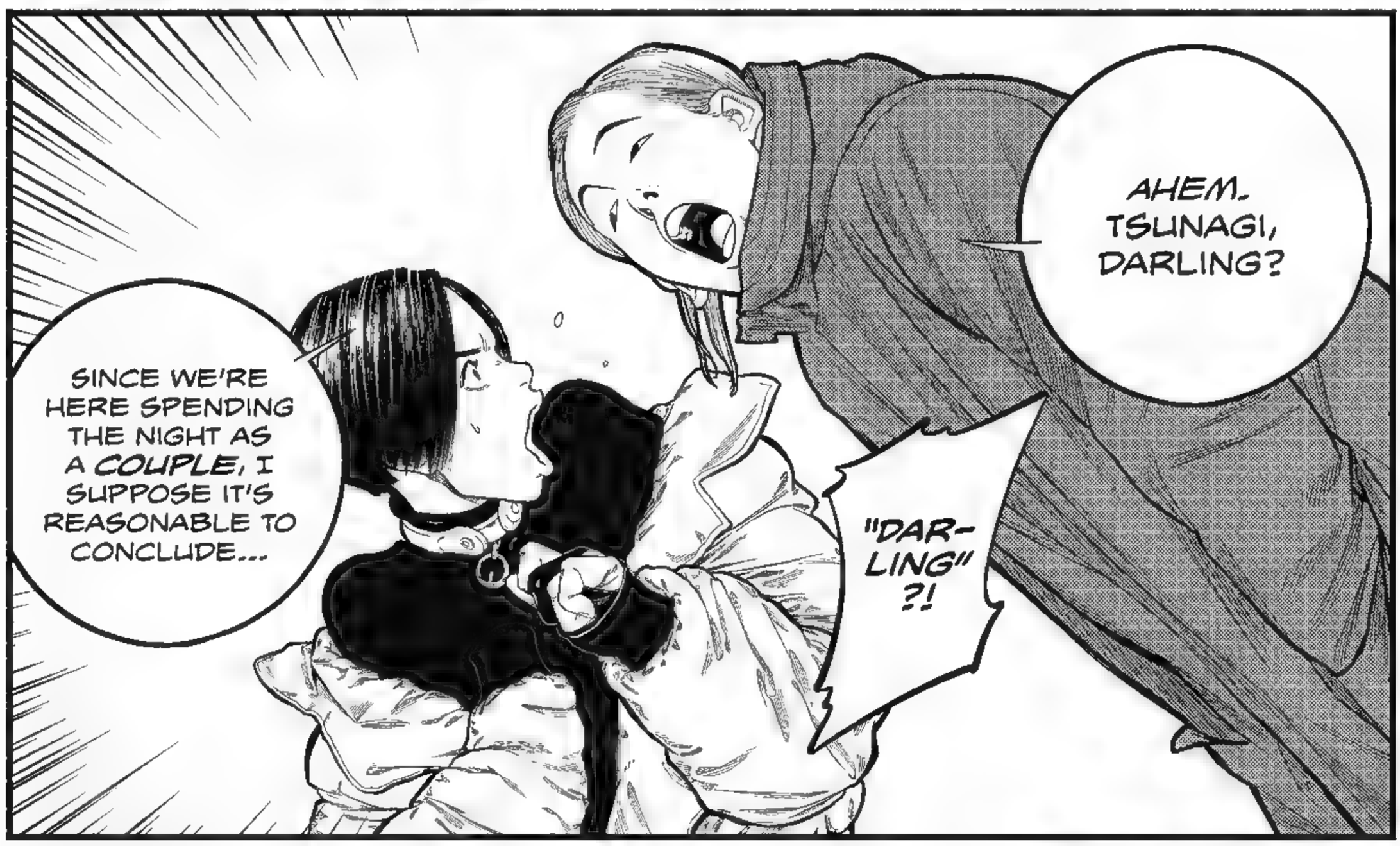
WHRR

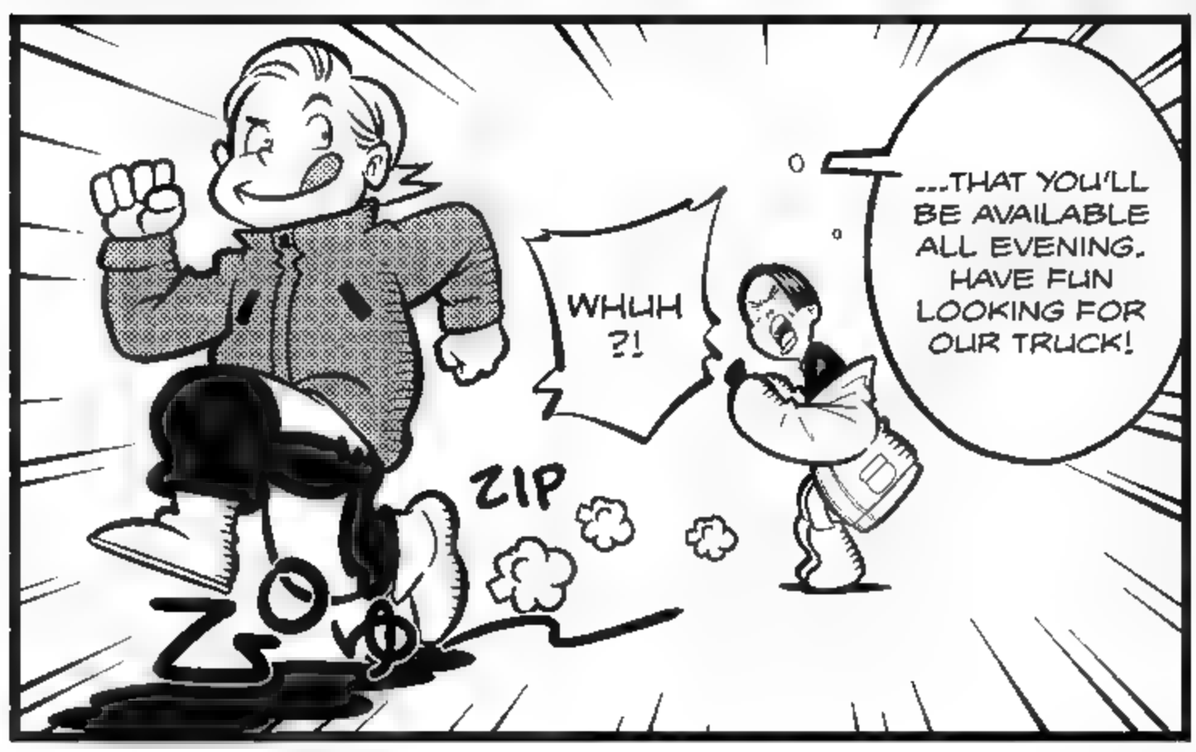
WHRRR


IF YOU DON'T WANT SOMEONE SEEING IT, BETTER BURY IT, HUH.
PROBABLY A STINGY CONTRACTOR. WON'T PONY UP FOR PROCESSING COSTS, SO HE DRIVES 'EM UP INTO THE MOUNTAINS TO DUMP.
EEP!! WHAT'S WITH ALL THE POLLU-TANTS?!
I KNEW THEY MUST'VE USED SOMETHING. ARTIFICIAL MEM-BRANES DON'T DEGRADE THIS SLOWLY.

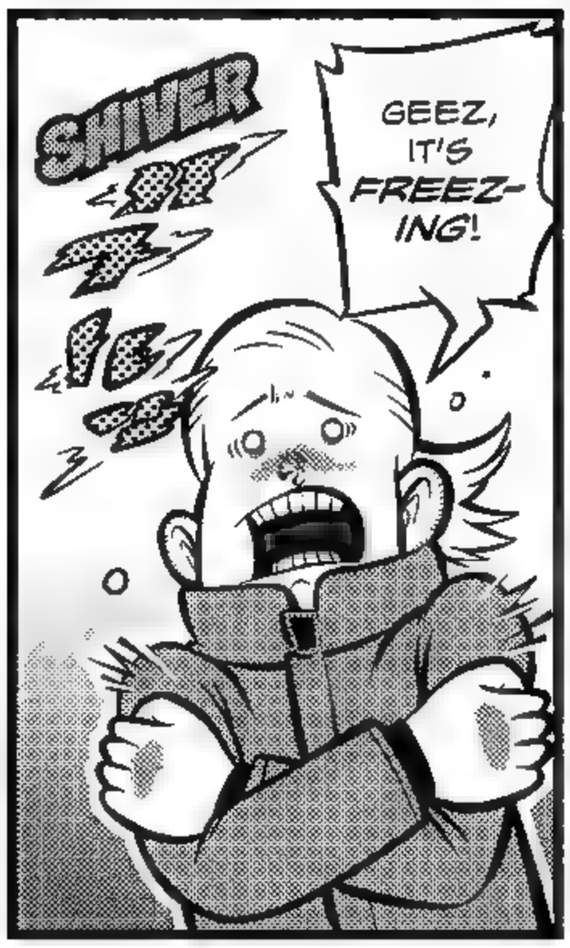
AND EVERY VEHICLE CHECKS OUT!
BUT WAIT! WE ALREADY USED THE PREFEC-TURAL POLICE'S INFONET TO VIEW TRAFFIC LOGS FROM DISPOSAL CONTRAC-TORS—

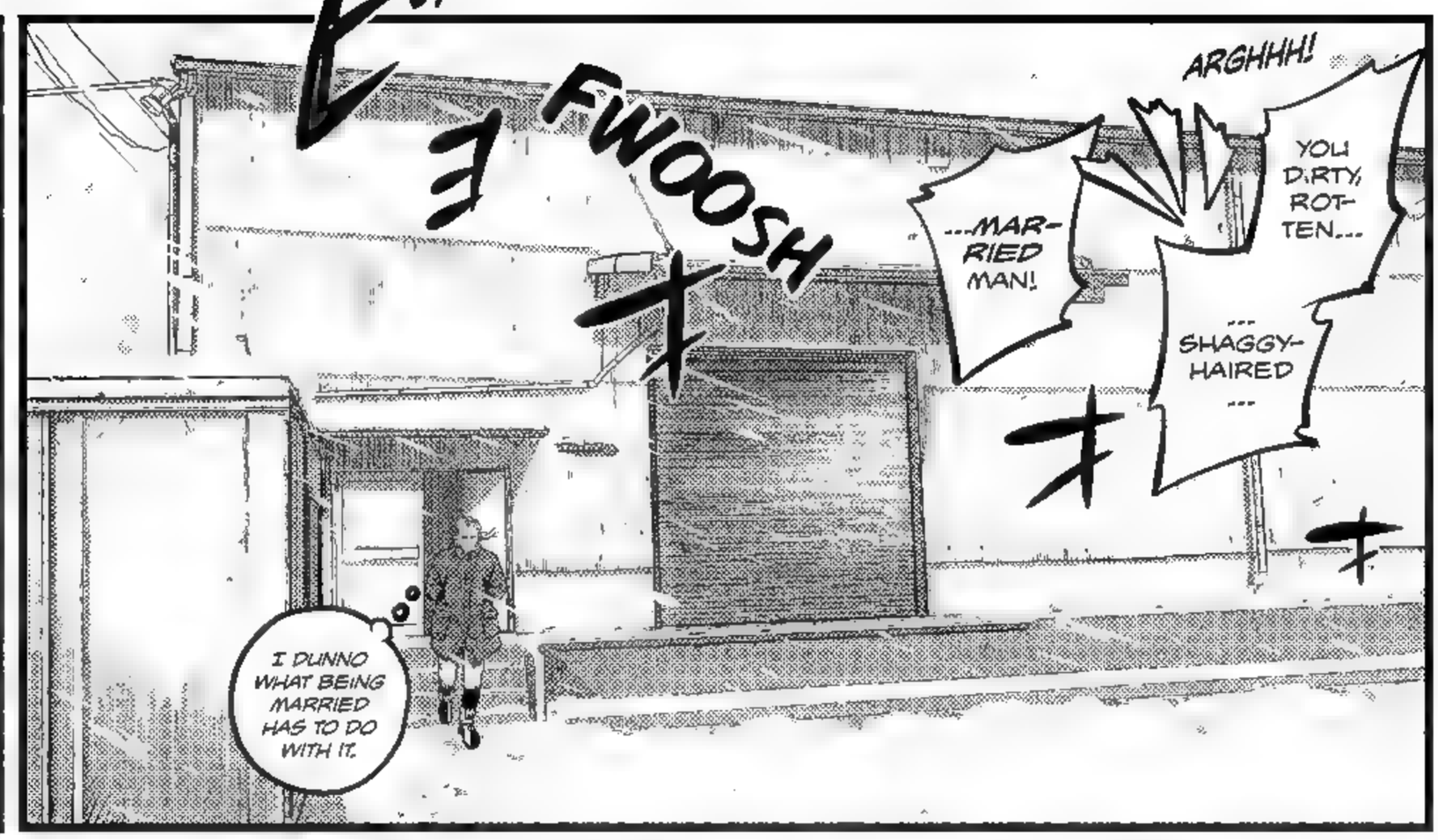
THINK OF IT MORE LIKE WHITTLING DOWN THE POSSIBILITIES.
THEN WE'RE NOT CHECKING FOR THE RIGHT THING. MAYBE IT'S NOT A CONTRACTOR.
THAT'LL TAKE *FOR-EVER*! I DON'T HAVE A CYBER-BRAIN, Y'KNOW ?!
WHOA, WHOA! DON'T TELL ME YOU WANNA START OVER FROM *SCRATCH*!
WHAT DO YOU MEAN?


SINCE WE'RE HERE SPENDING THE NIGHT AS A *COUPLE*, I SUPPOSE IT'S REASONABLE TO CONCLUDE...
AHEM. TSUNAGI, DARLING?
"DAR-LING" ?!

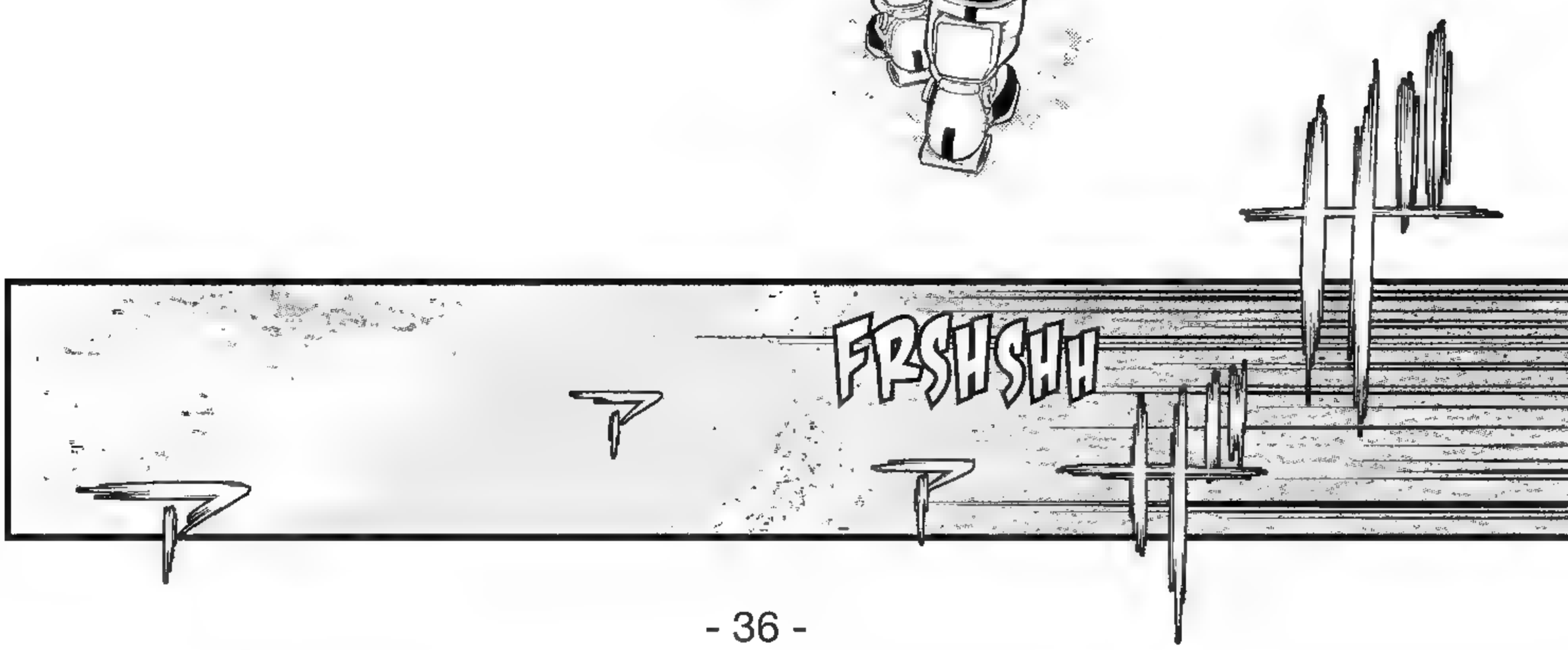

WHUH ?!
...THAT YOU'LL BE AVAILABLE ALL EVENING. HAVE FUN LOOKING FOR OUR TRUCK!
ZIP

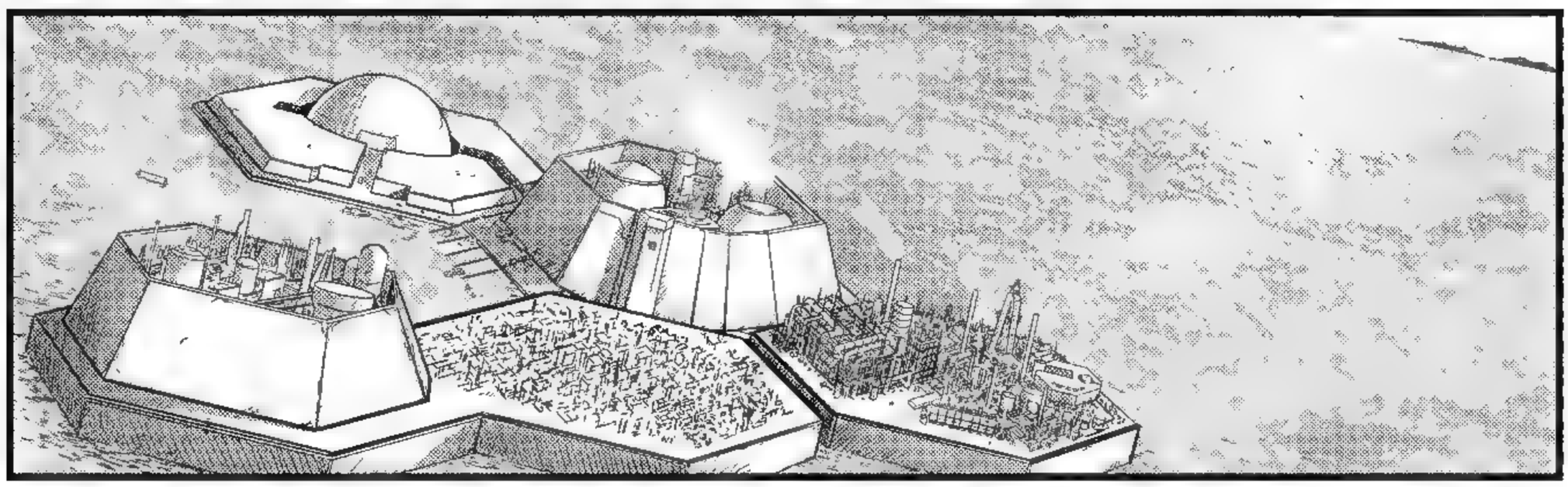
HUH?
IS HE SUGGEST-ING...?

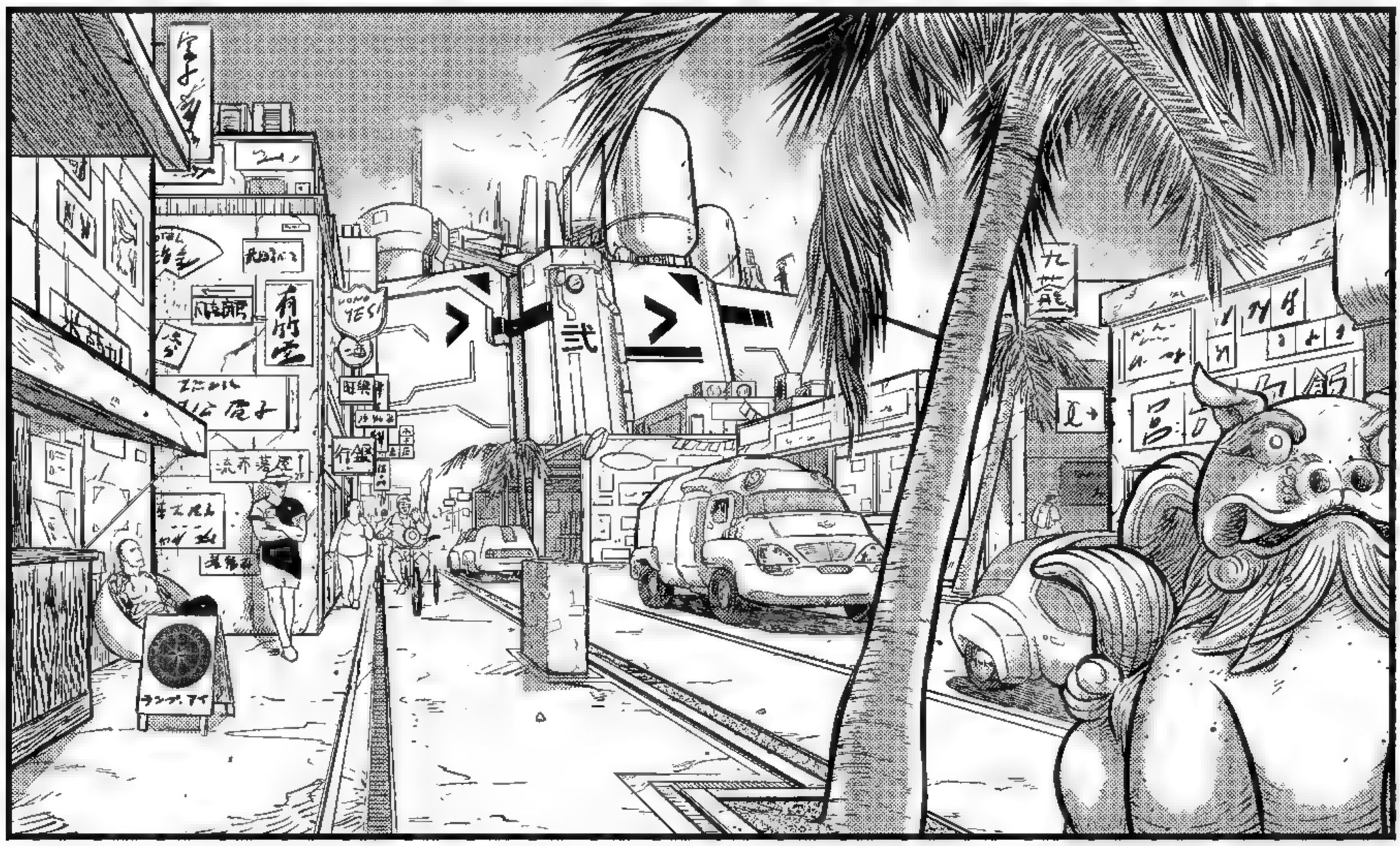

SHIVER
GEEZ, IT'S FREEZ-ING!


FWOOSH
I DUNNO WHAT BEING MARRIED HAS TO DO WITH IT.
---MAR-RIED MAN!
ARGHHH!
YOU DIRTY, ROT-TEN...
--- SHAGGY-HAIRED ---

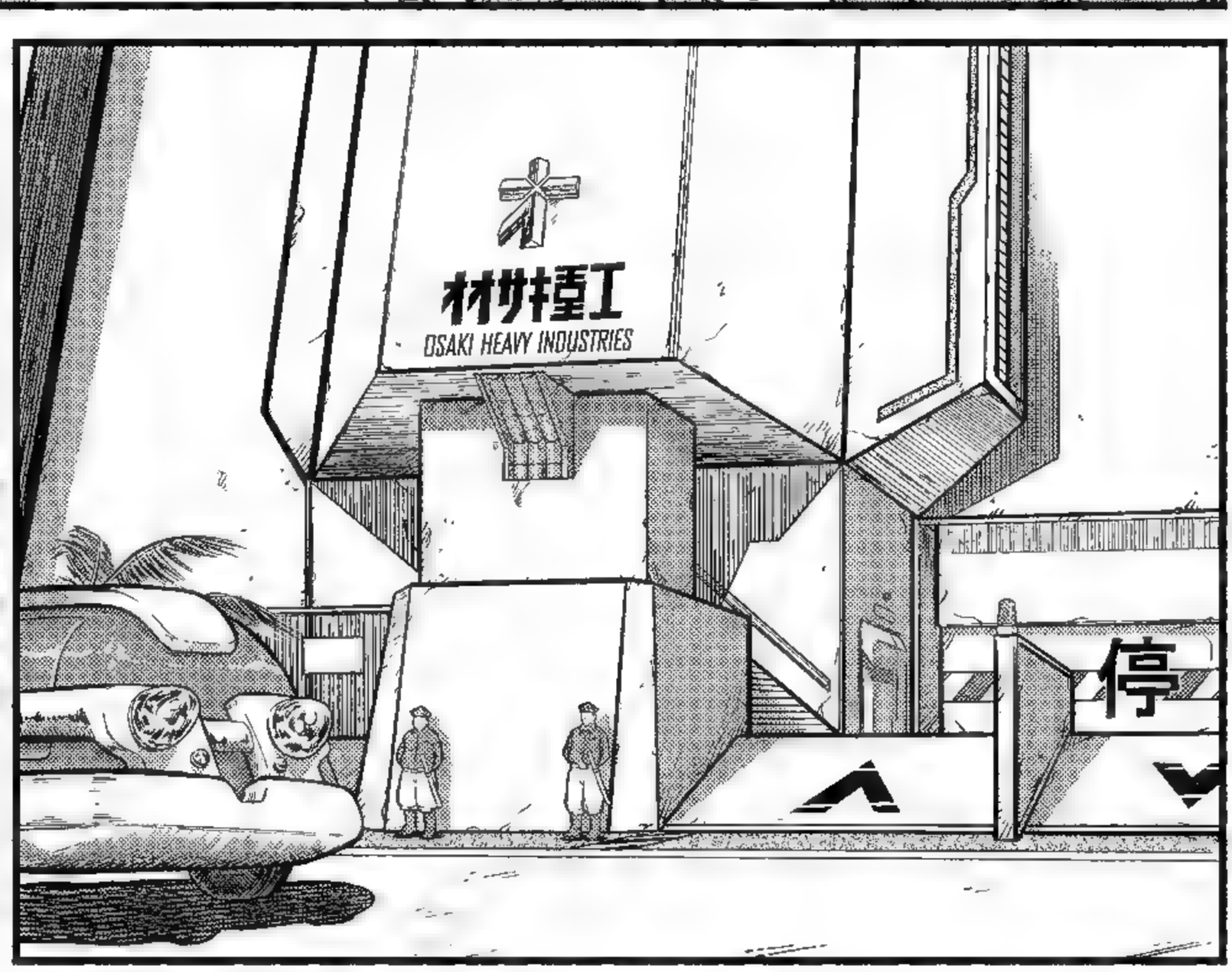
STRANDED IN SNOW COUNTRY WHILE OL' BATOU KICKS BACK IN THE SOUTHERN ISLES.
FWOOSH
UNBE-LIEVABLE.


FRSHSHH



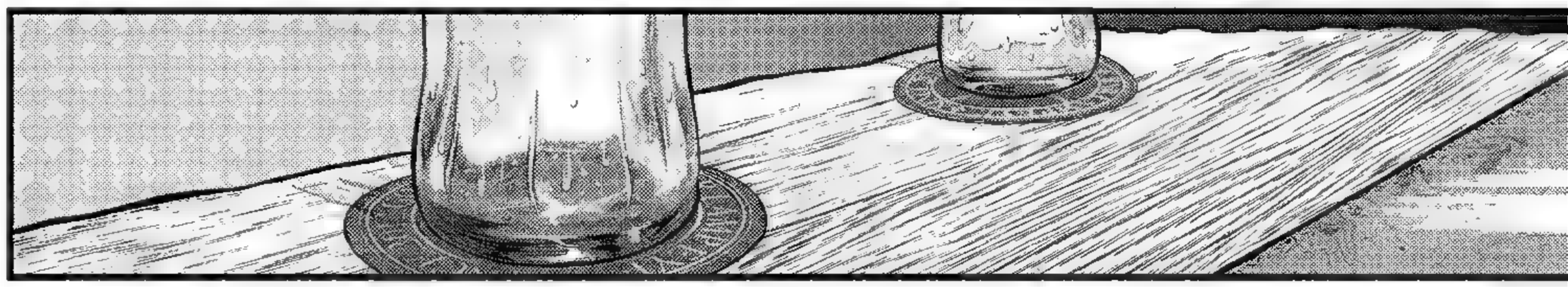

弐
有竹堂
流れ落屋
行銀
九龍

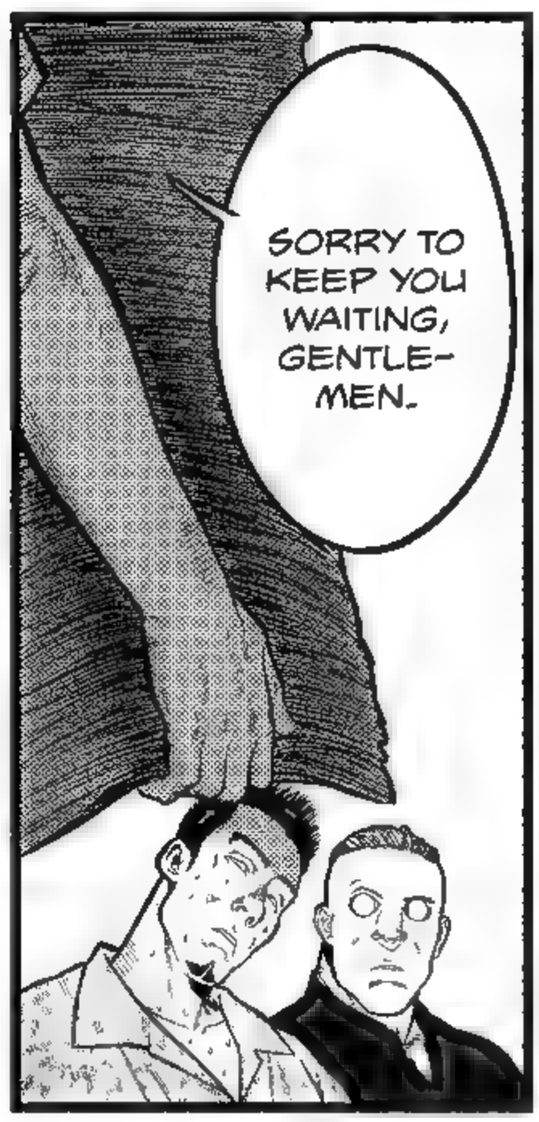
オオサキ重
OSAKI HEAVY INDUS


オオサキ重工
OSAKI HEAVY INDUSTRIES
停

FEELS LIKE I'M GONNA BURN UP ANY SECOND.

UNBE-LIEVABLE.





WHUMP

OOF!

YOU STILL KEEP YOUR RECORDS ON PAPER?!

HFF!

HFF!

LOOOOOOM

...?!

OOH, THAT SMARTS!

EVERY INSPECTION RECORD WE'VE GOT FOR A TYPE-29 PROSTHETIC.

THIS IS ALL OF IT.

PEEK

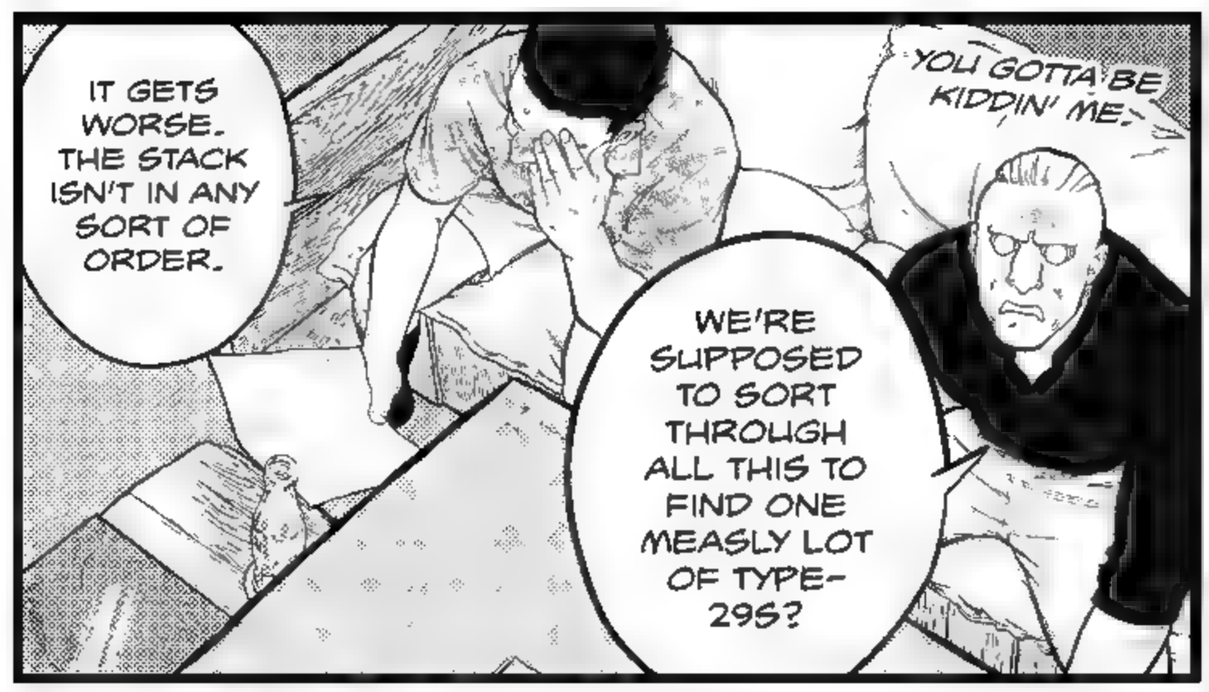
HEE HEE...

YOU KNOW WHAT THEY SAY. IF YOU DON'T WANT SOMEONE SEEING IT, BETTER BURY IT!

NO SUBSTITUTE FOR GOOD OL' PULP AND A FILING CABINET.

KEEP 'EM ELECTRONICALLY AND IT'S HARD TO TELL IF THEY'VE BEEN TAMPERED WITH.

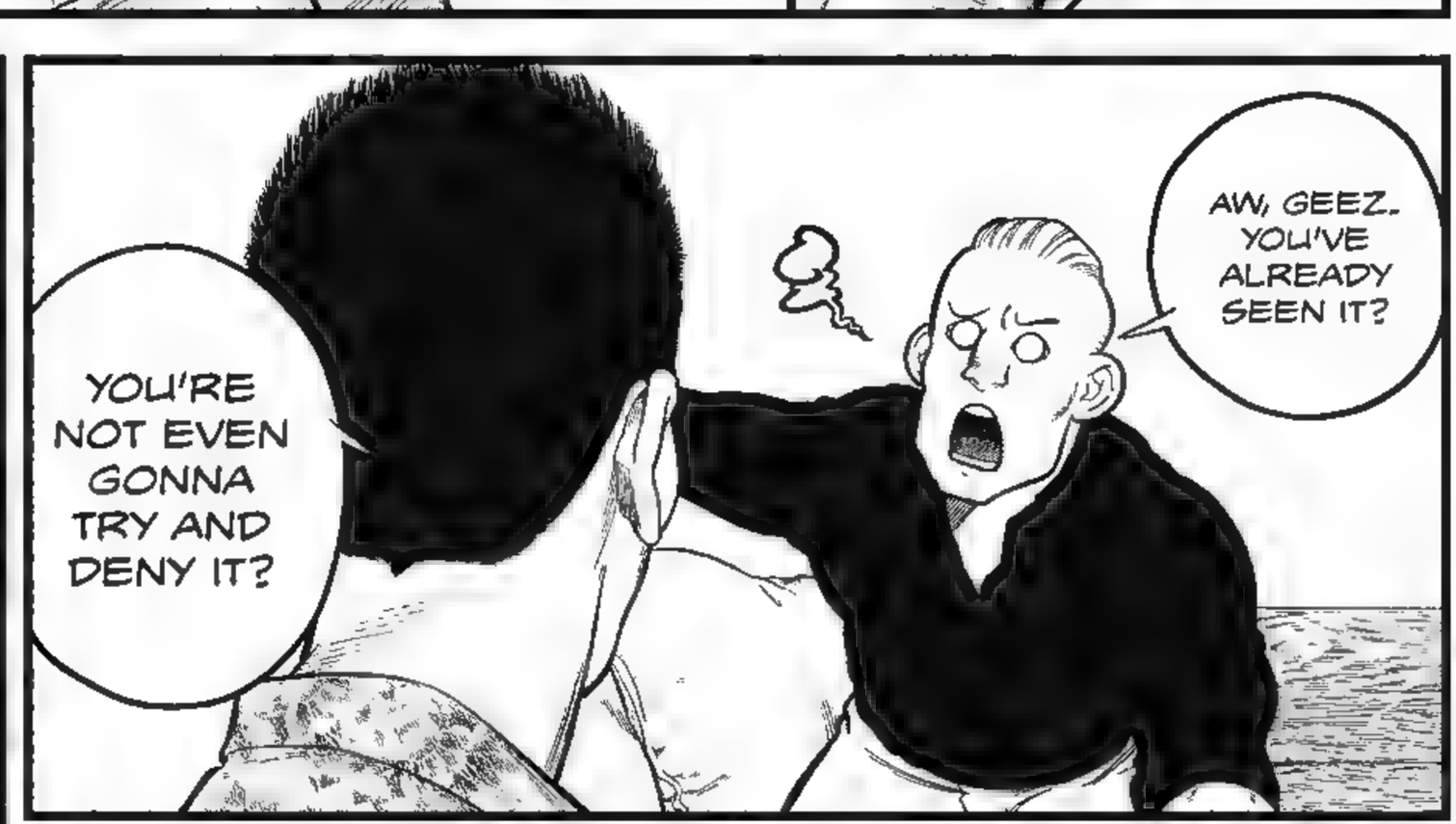
THAT'S HOW THE BOSS LIKES IT.

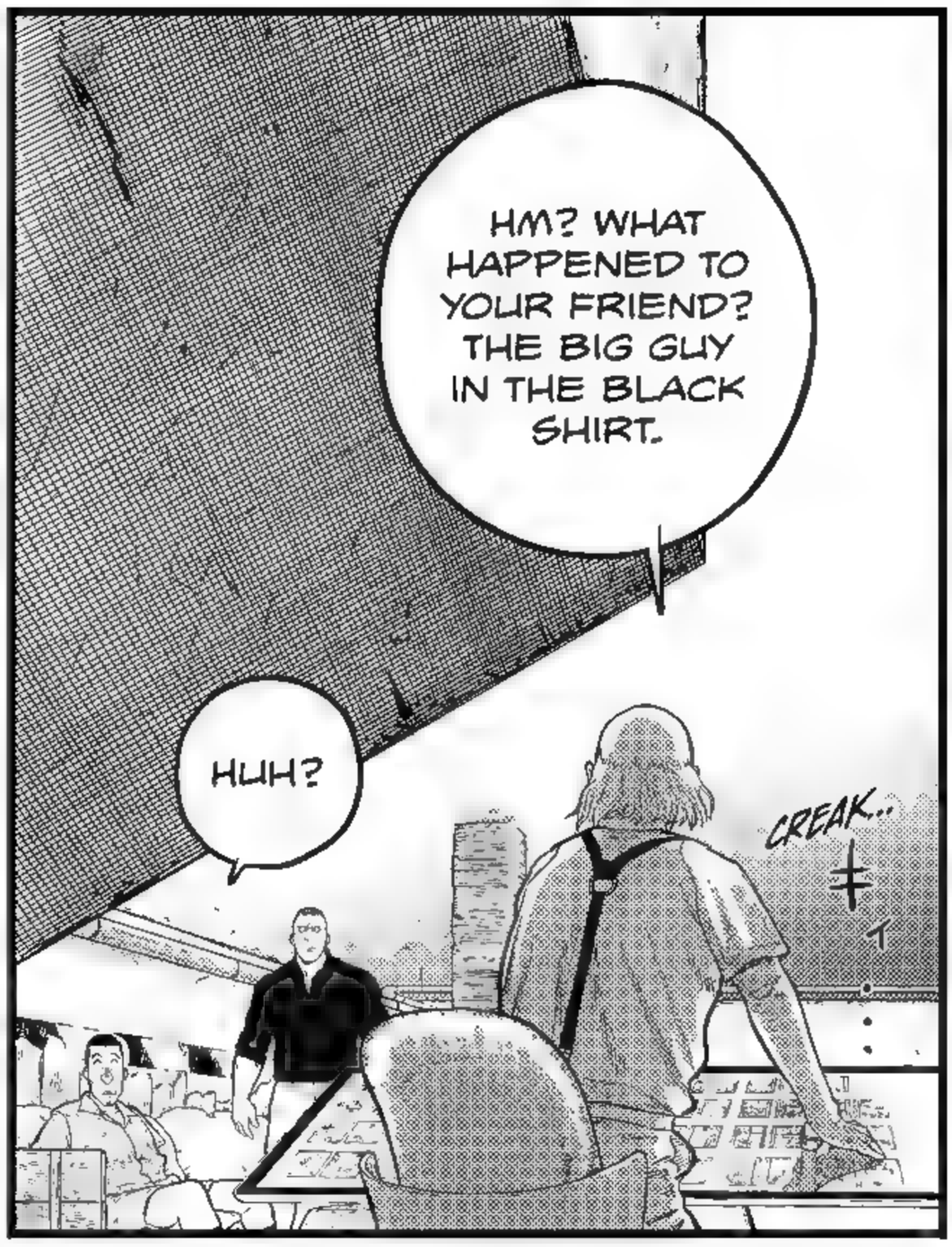

IT GETS WORSE. THE STACK ISN'T IN ANY SORT OF ORDER.
YOU GOTTA BE KIDDIN' ME.
WE'RE SUPPOSED TO SORT THROUGH ALL THIS TO FIND ONE MEASLY LOT OF TYPE-29S?

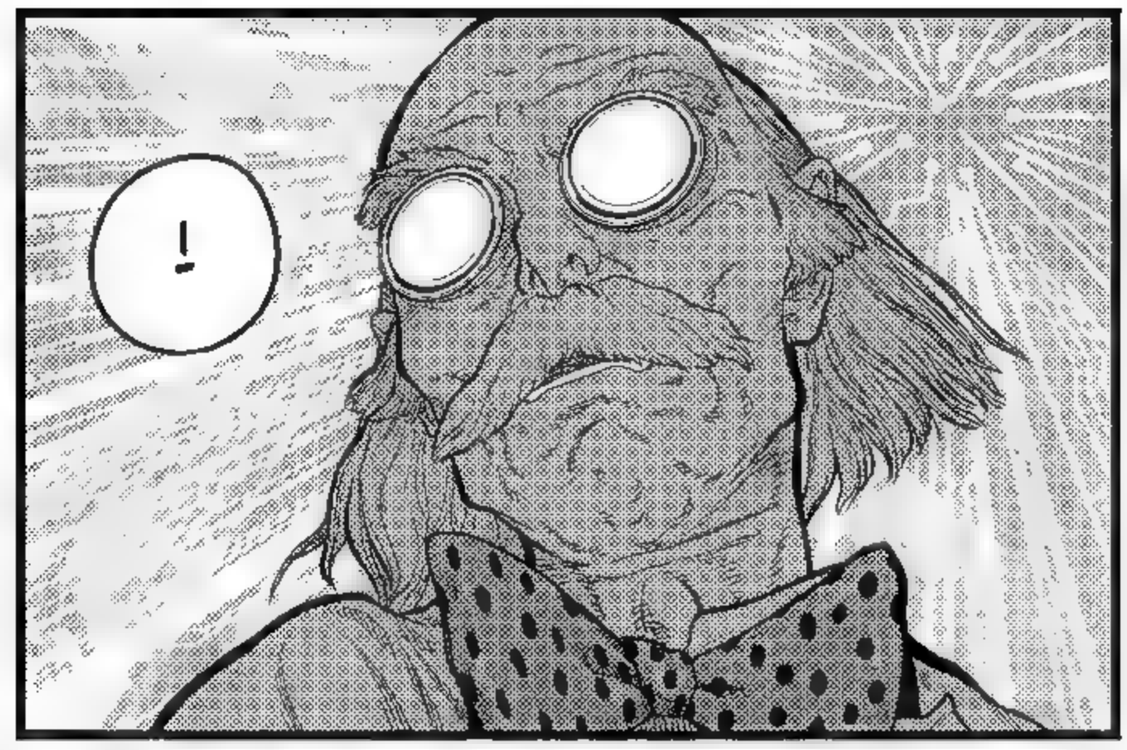
WELL, HAVE AT IT. NO TAKING ANYTHING OFF-SITE, MIND YOU.
YES-SIR.
FWUMP
I'LL BE HERE KEEPING AN EYE ON YOU. HEE HEE!

HUH?! WHOA, WHOA. I KNOW THAT TRICK.
AHEM. AZUMA, DARLING?
THAT'S THAT THING TOGUSA DOES WHENEVER HE'S GOT SOME OBNOXIOUS FAVOR TO ASK.
"DAR-LING" ?!

ANYWAY, OUR REAL PROBLEM IS...


YOU'RE NOT EVEN GONNA TRY AND DENY IT?
AW, GEEZ. YOU'VE ALREADY SEEN IT?

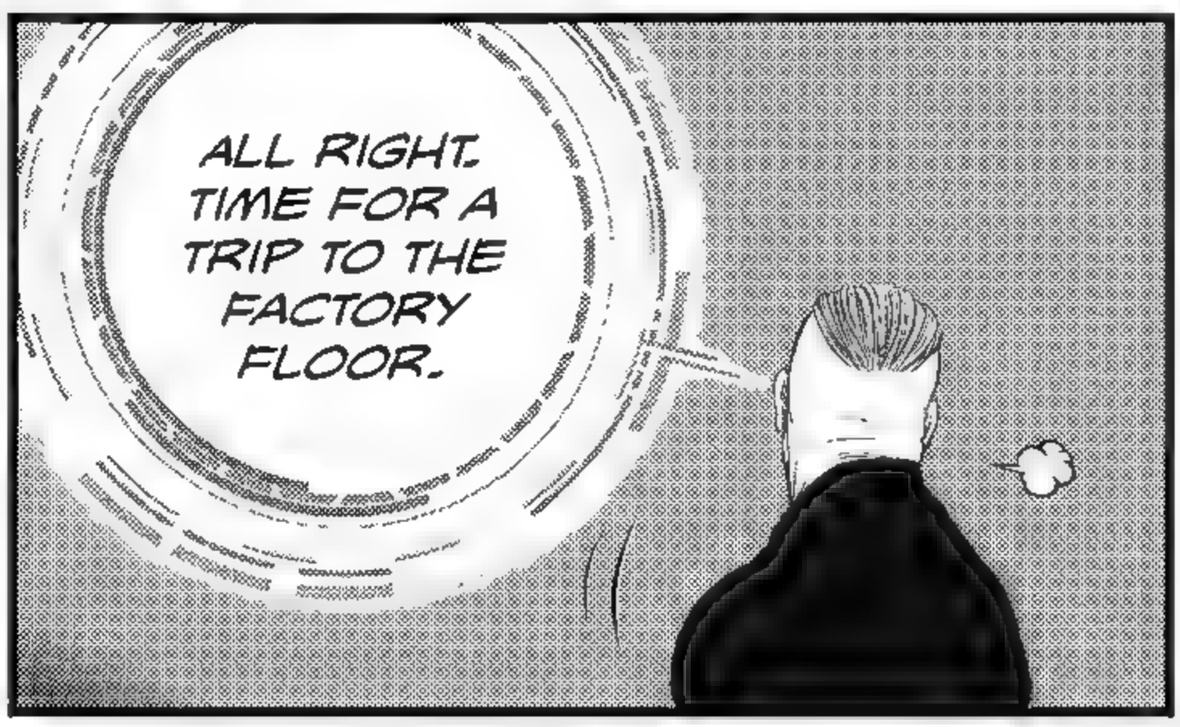

HM? WHAT HAPPENED TO YOUR FRIEND? THE BIG GUY IN THE BLACK SHIRT.
HUH?
CREAK...

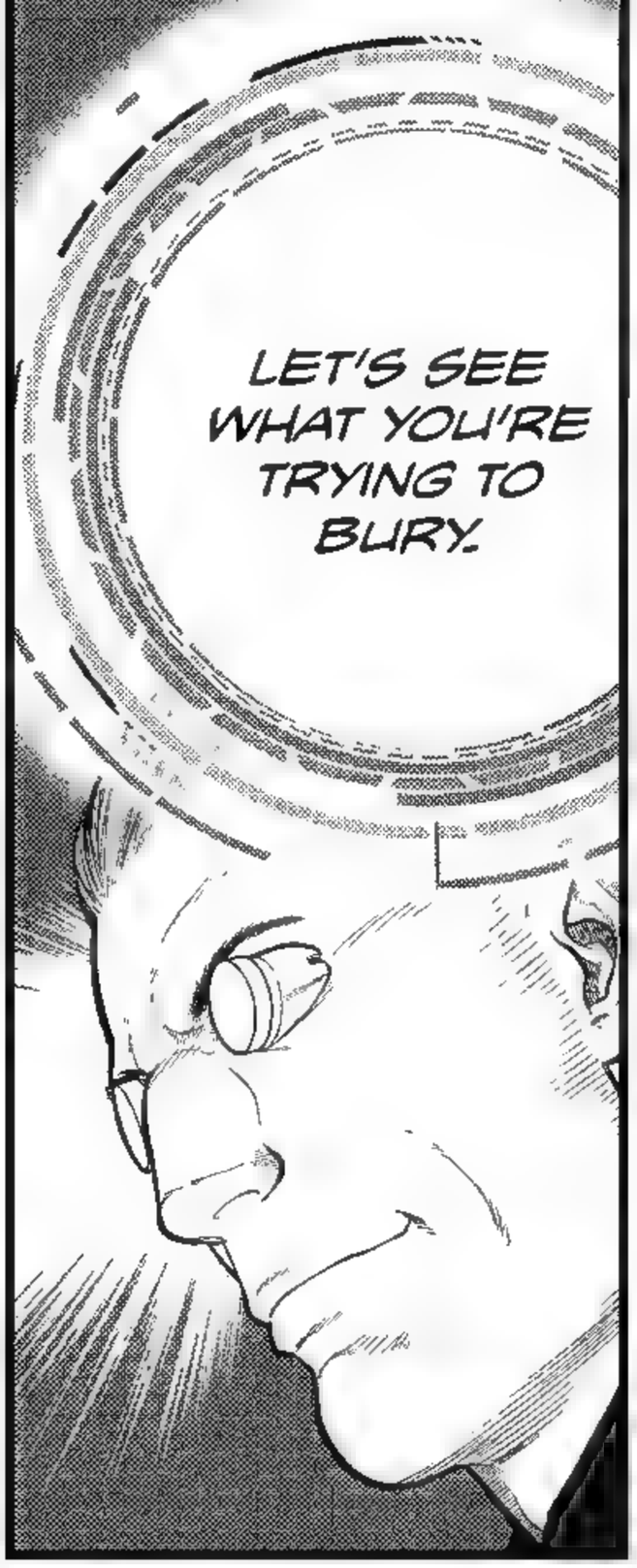

!

SKRRK
SKRRK

AH. POOR FELLA.
OH, HIM? YEAH WELL, Y'KNOW. HAD A BAD BREAKUP, NOW HE HAS THE RUNS...
REAL FUNNY. YOU WANT ME TO TWIST OFF THAT BIG NOSE OF YOURS?

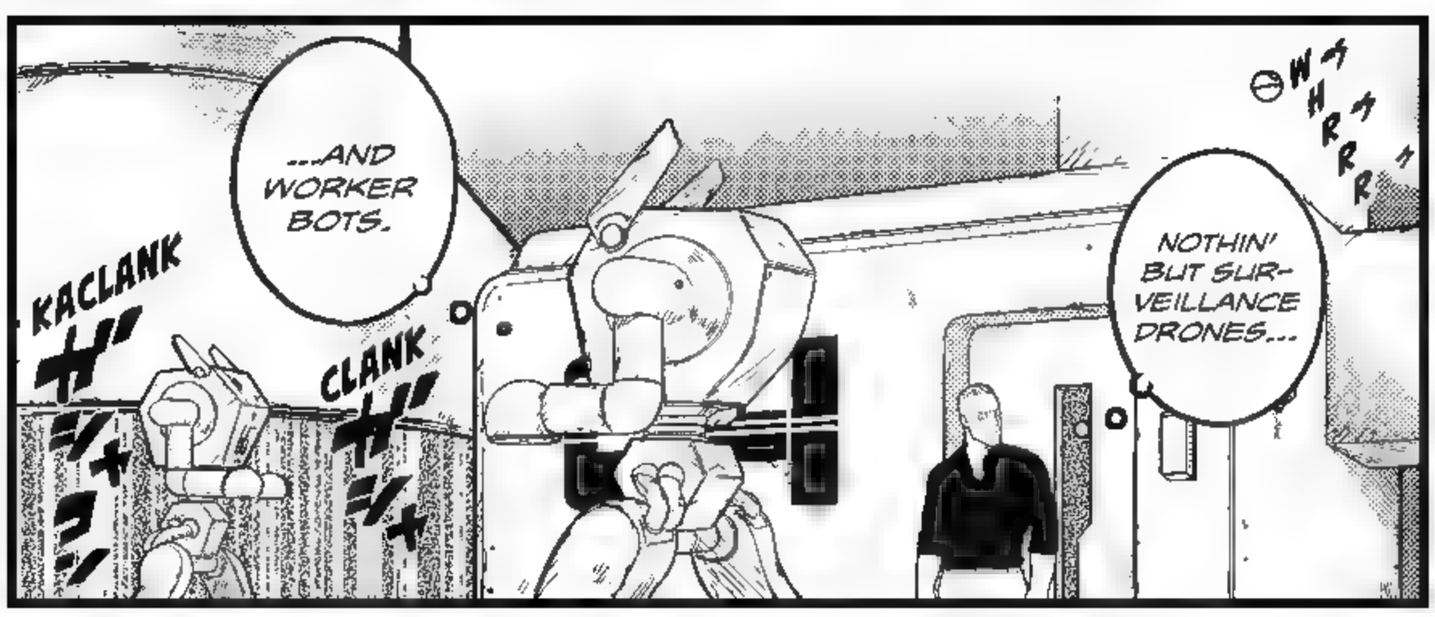
YOU HACK HIS EYES OR SOME-THING?
WHISPER
WHISPER
WHAT ARE YOU, DENSE? DON'T USE YOUR VOICE. OPEN UP A DIRECT LINK.

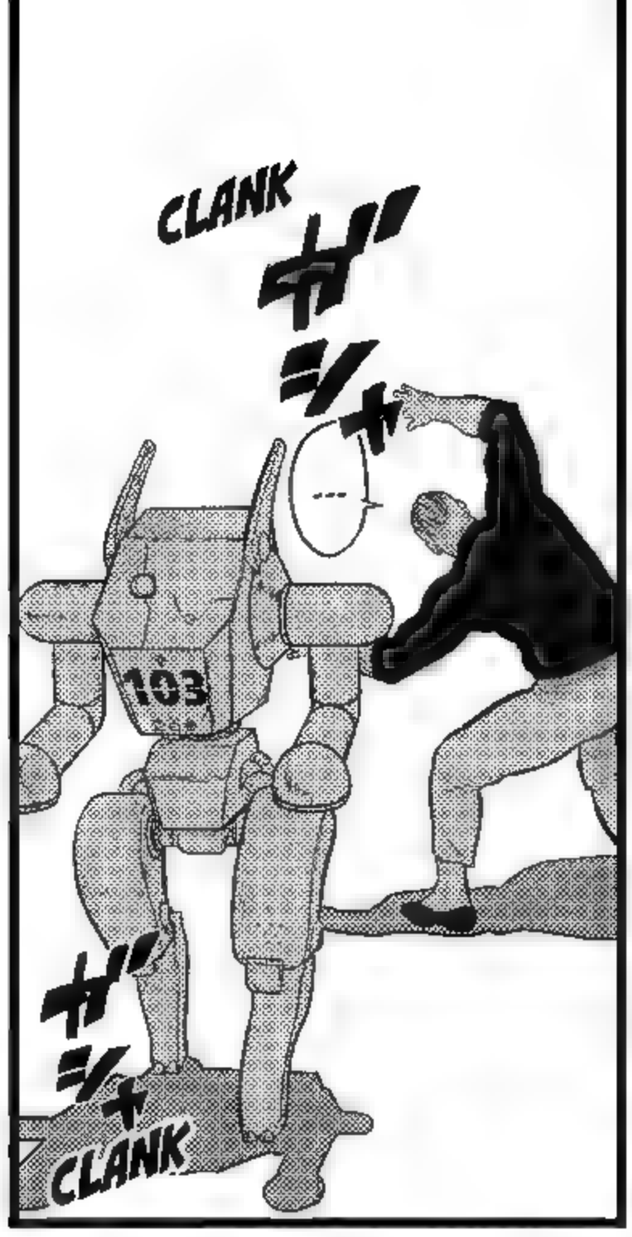

ALL RIGHT. TIME FOR A TRIP TO THE FACTORY FLOOR.


LET'S SEE WHAT YOU'RE TRYING TO BURY.

YOU SERIOUSLY THINK A STACK FULL OF BOOKLICE IS RELIABLE?
I'M GONNA CHECK THEIR NET AND DIG UP ANY ANOMALIES.
ENJOY THE SEARCH FOR OUR TYPE-29S.
YOU'RE SERIOUSLY GONNA MAKE ME DO THIS ON MY OWN?

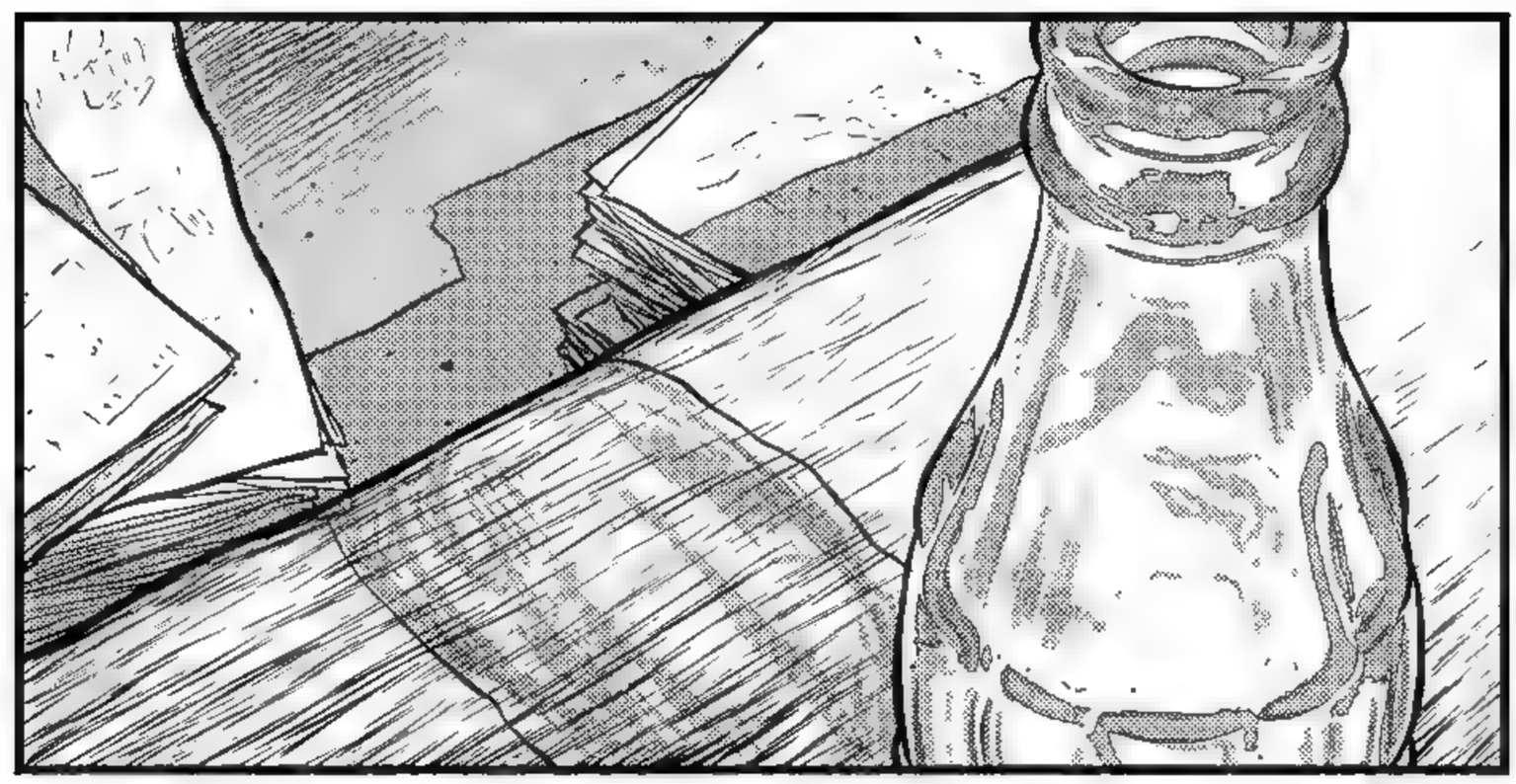
91
82

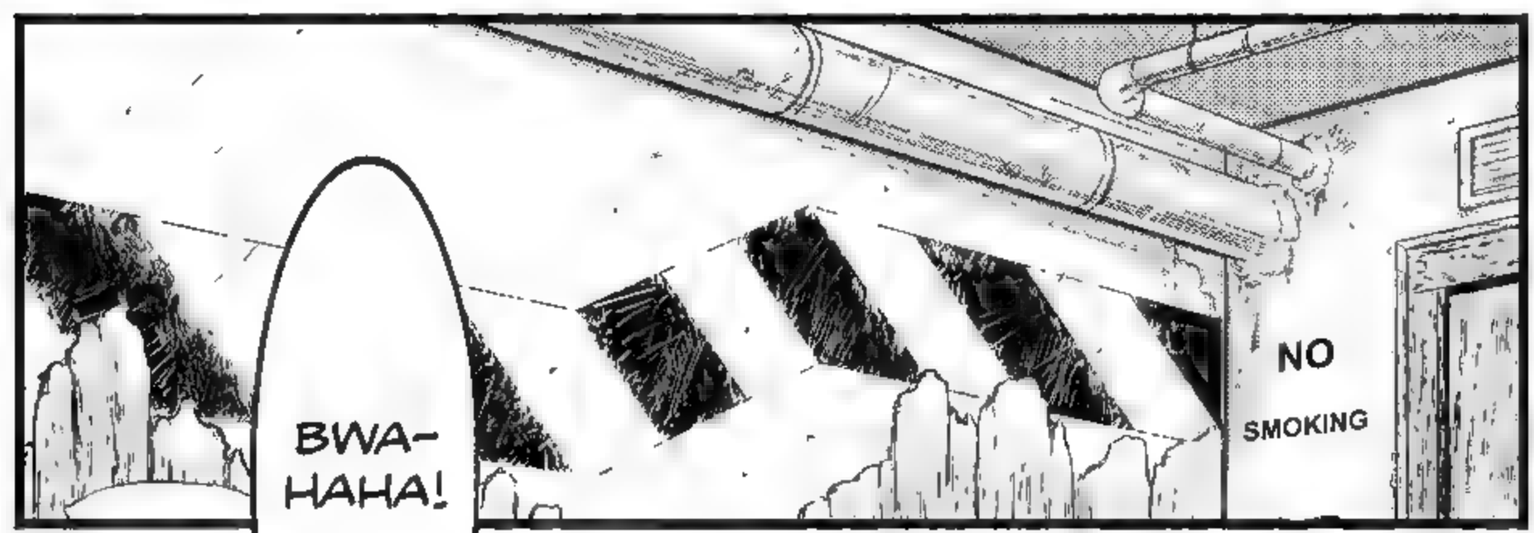

...AND WORKER BOTS.
KACLANK
CLANK
NOTHIN' BUT SUR-VEILLANCE DRONES...
WHRRR

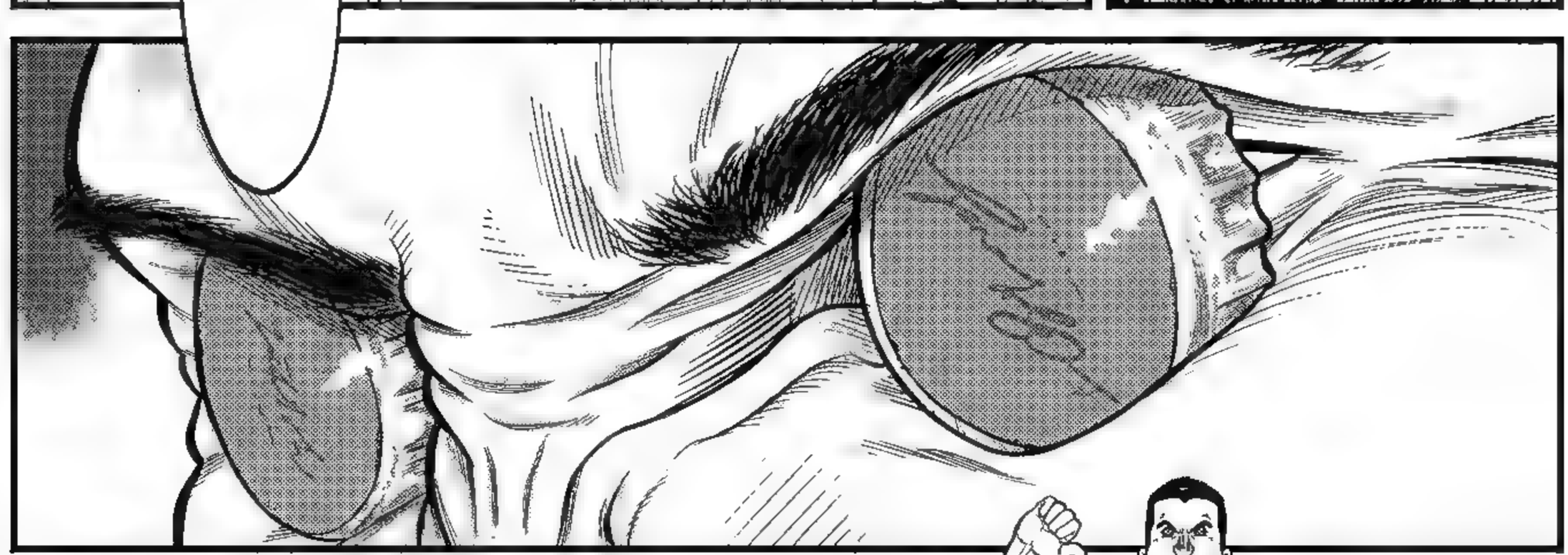

CLANK
103
CLANK

IF THERE'S SOMETHING YOU DON'T WANT ANYONE TO SEE, BURY IT.
I'M AS GOOD AS INVISIBLE.
不要进入
STAFF ONLY

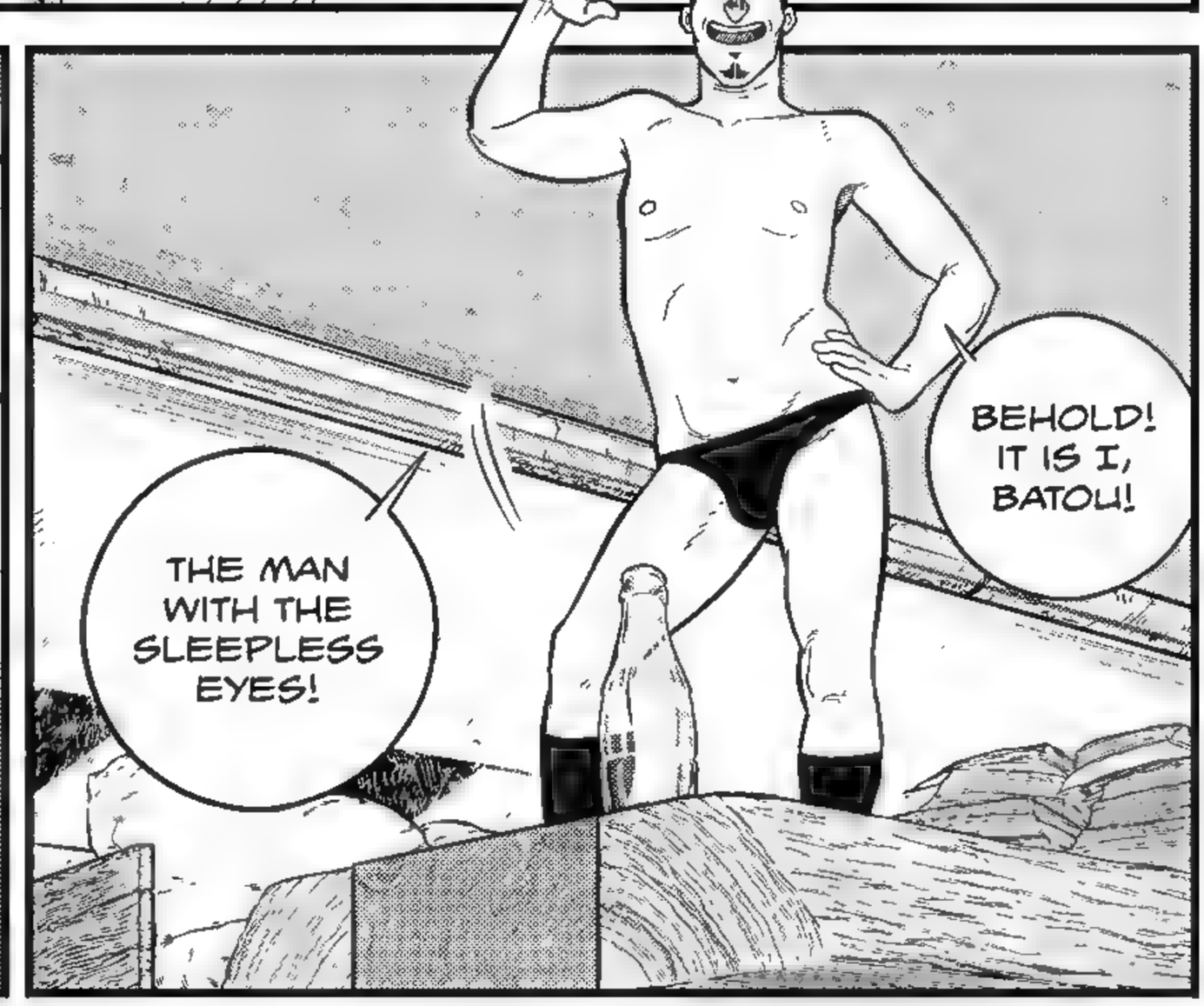
CLANK
CLANK



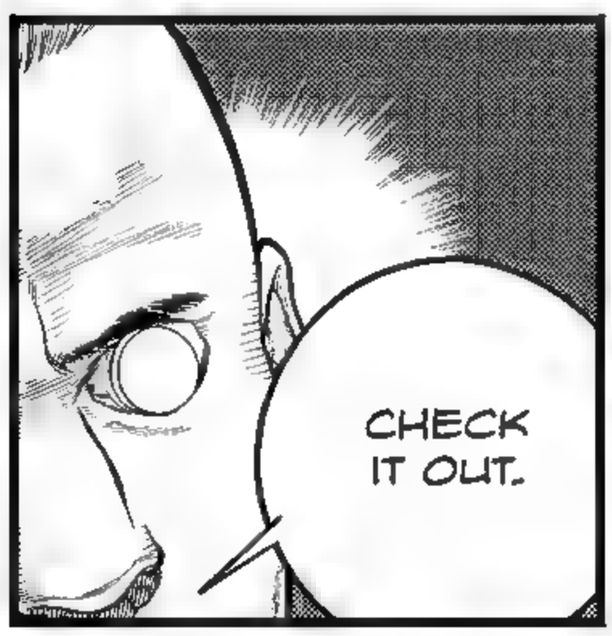

BWA-HAHA!
NO
SMOKING



JOLT
SO THIS IS HOW YOU SPEND YOUR TIME?
EEP!


BEHOLD! IT IS I, BATOU!
THE MAN WITH THE SLEEPLESS EYES!

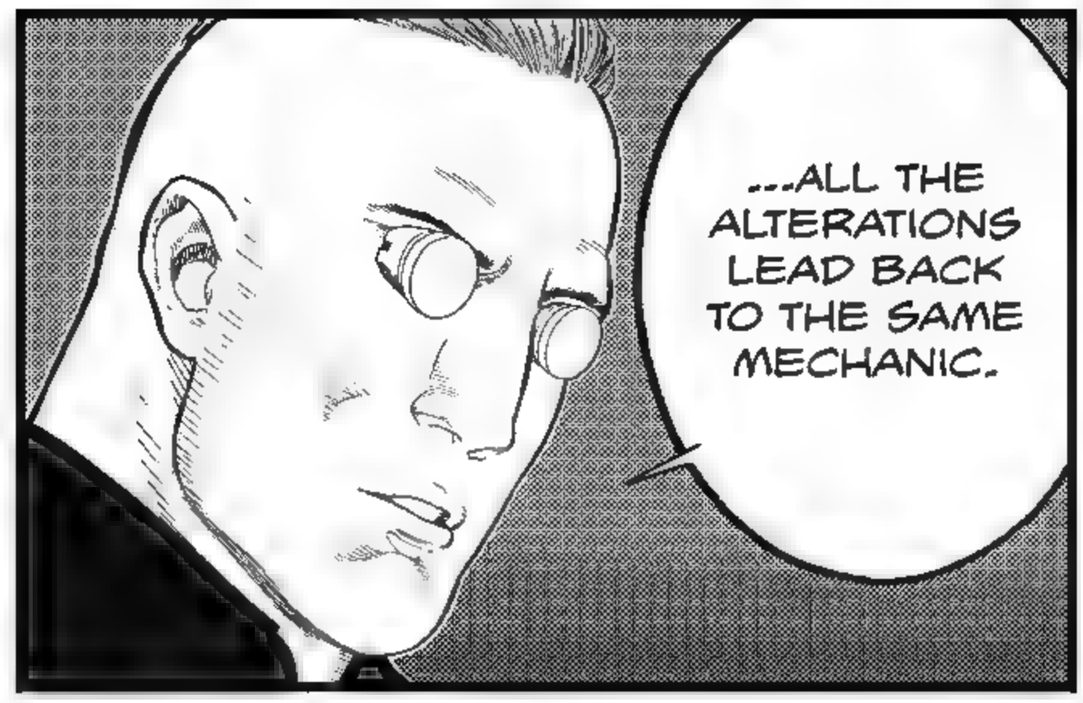
I WAS BORED! I FOUND OUR LOT AGES AGO.
SHUT UP!
GEEZ! SAY SOME-THING BEFORE YOU WALK IN LIKE THAT!
THE FILE'S OVER THERE!
WHAT HAP-PENED TO GRAMPS?
THE HEAT SCRAMBLE YER BRAINS OR SOME-THIN'?

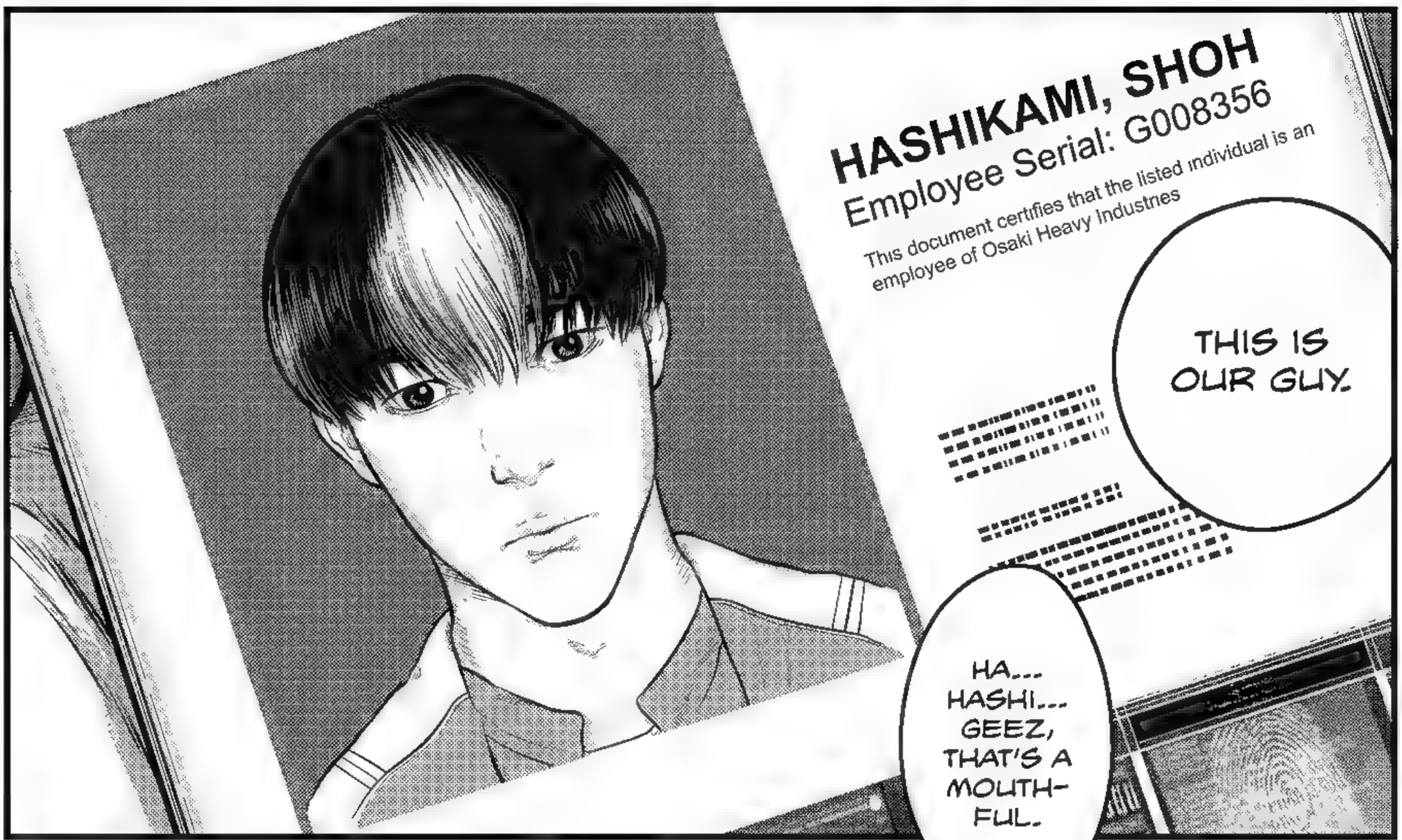

CHECK IT OUT.

HEY, IT'S NOT ALL ON ME.
FLICK
SO THIS IS WHAT THEY BURIED.
SAID HE HAD TO GO FIX A PROBLEM WITH THE SURVEIL-LANCE SYSTEM.
BET I CAN GUESS WHO CAUSED THAT.

HUH?
ALTERED HOW?
ANY SIGN OF INTRU-SION?
NO. THEY'VE GOT A STAND-ALONE NET HERE.
AND GET THIS...
THIS RE-CORD YOU WORKED SO HARD TO DIG OUT...
...ON THE NET, THE WHOLE ENTRY SHOWS TRACES OF BEING ALTERED.

SO IT WAS AN INSIDE JOB?!


...ALL THE ALTERATIONS LEAD BACK TO THE SAME MECHANIC.


HASHIKAMI, SHOH
Employee Serial: G008356
This document certifies that the listed individual is an employee of Osaki Heavy Industries
THIS IS OUR GUY.
HA... HASHI... GEEZ, THAT'S A MOUTH-FUL.

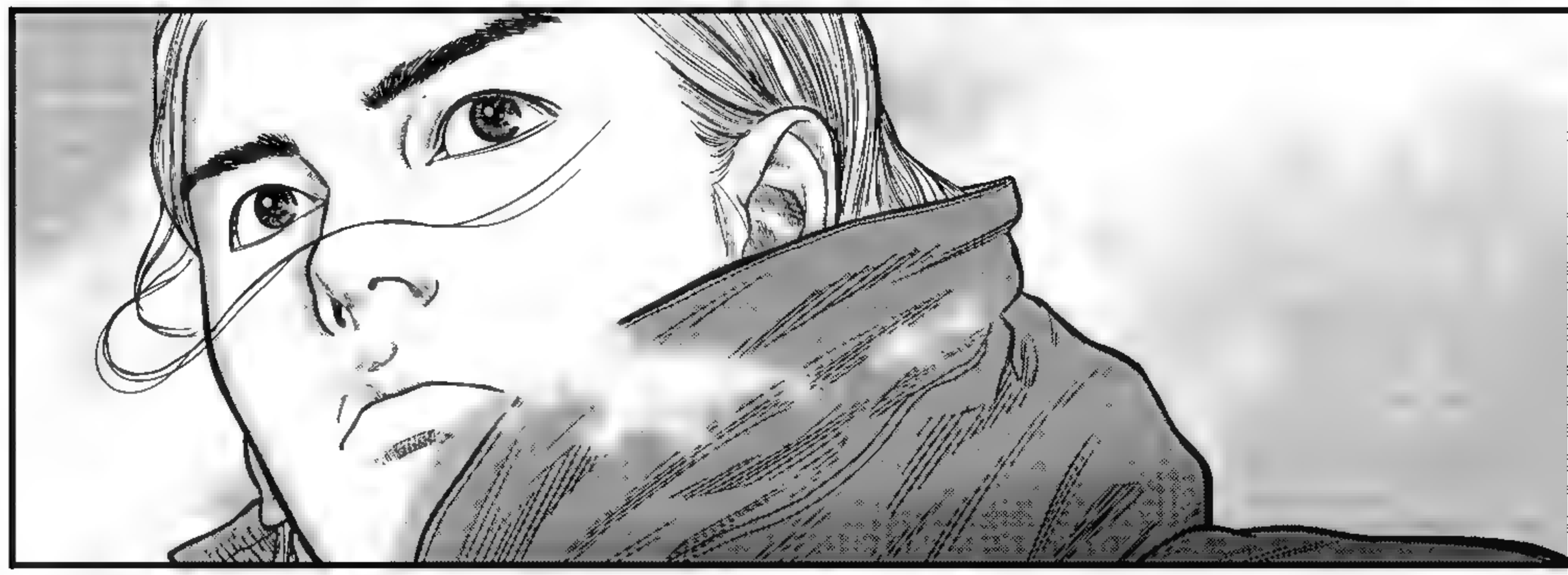
UP IN TOHOKU. HUH. SAME PLACE WHERE TOGUSA'S WORKING HIS CASE.

HASHIKAMI. SHOH HASHIKAMI.
A MIGRANT WORKER FROM AOMORI DISTRICT.

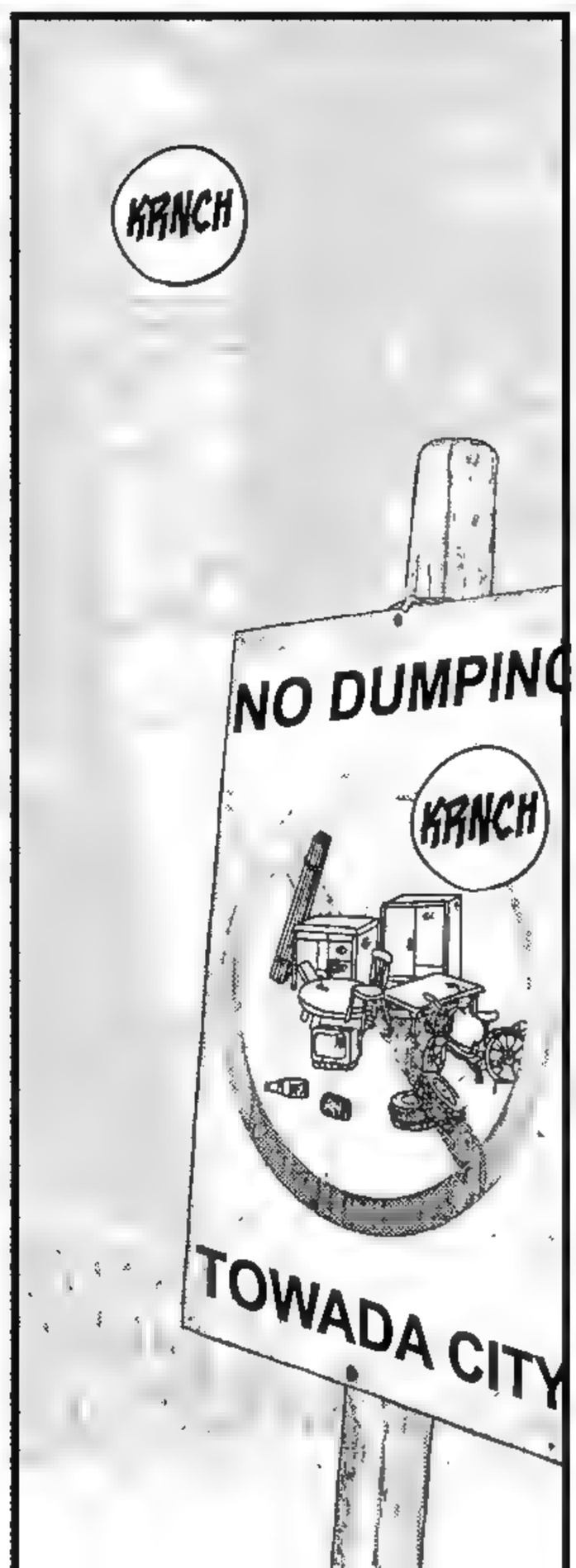
WHAT'S HE DOING ROOT-ING AROUND IN THE BOONIES, ANYWAY?
...
PWUFF
IT'S THE WEIRD-EST THING.

APPARENTLY THEY FOUND THE MAJOR'S SHELL UP THERE.
OH.
THEY FOUND THE MAJOR ?!

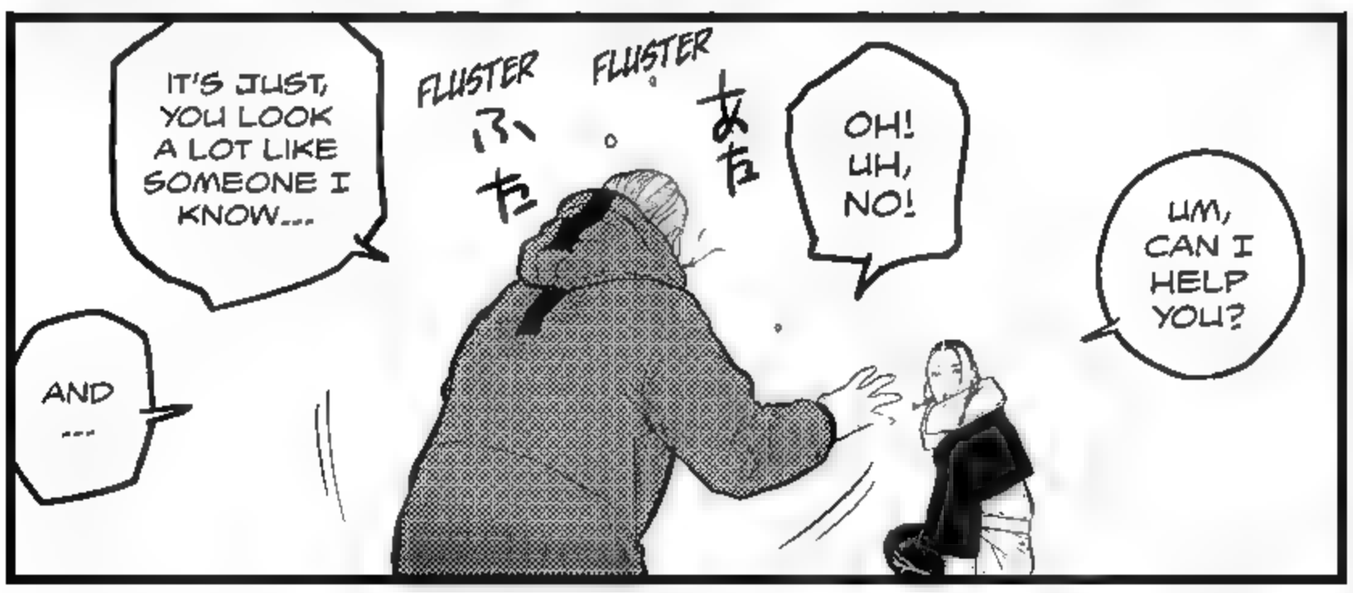
NO, UH, SEE...
WHAT I MEANT WAS...
ROLL...

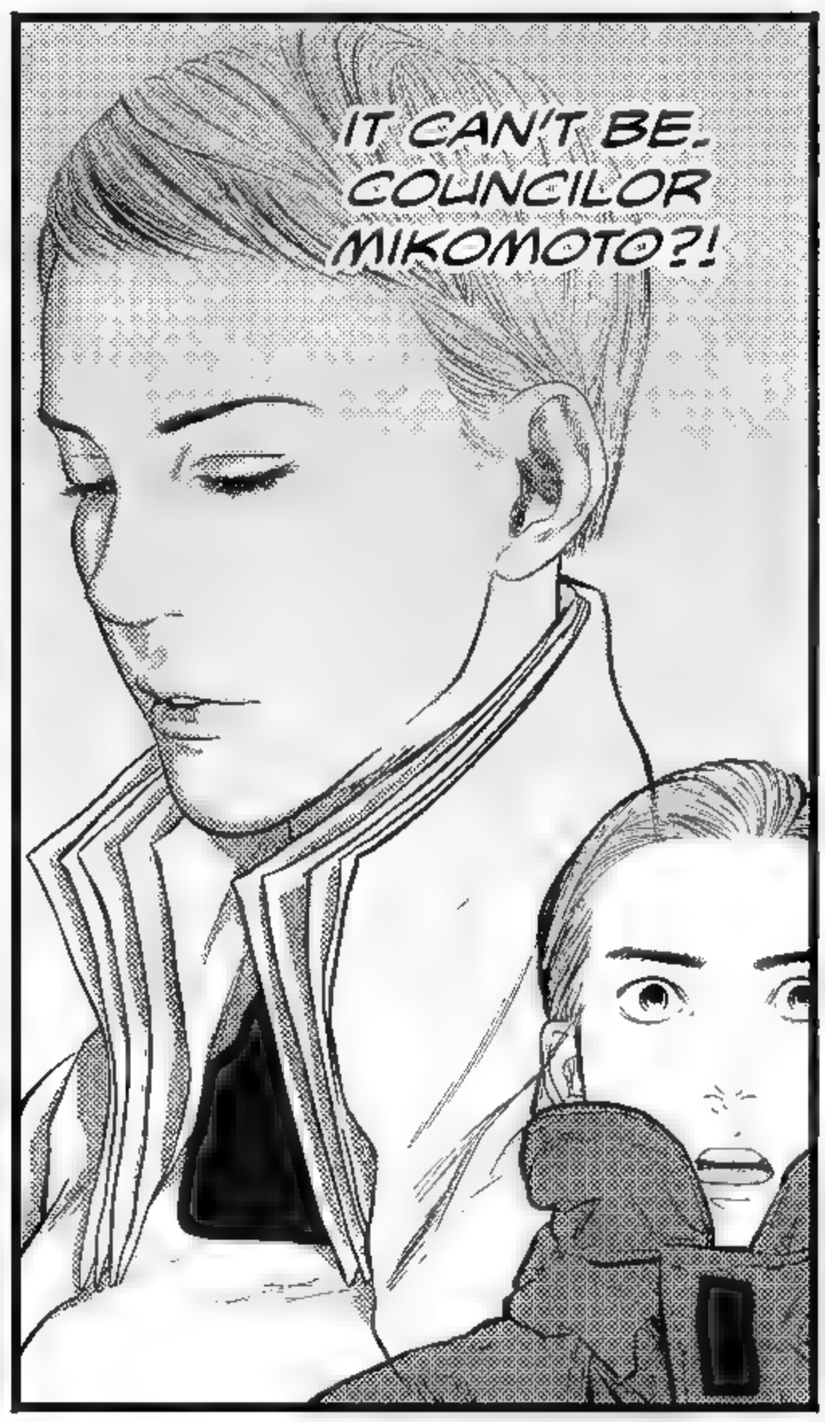


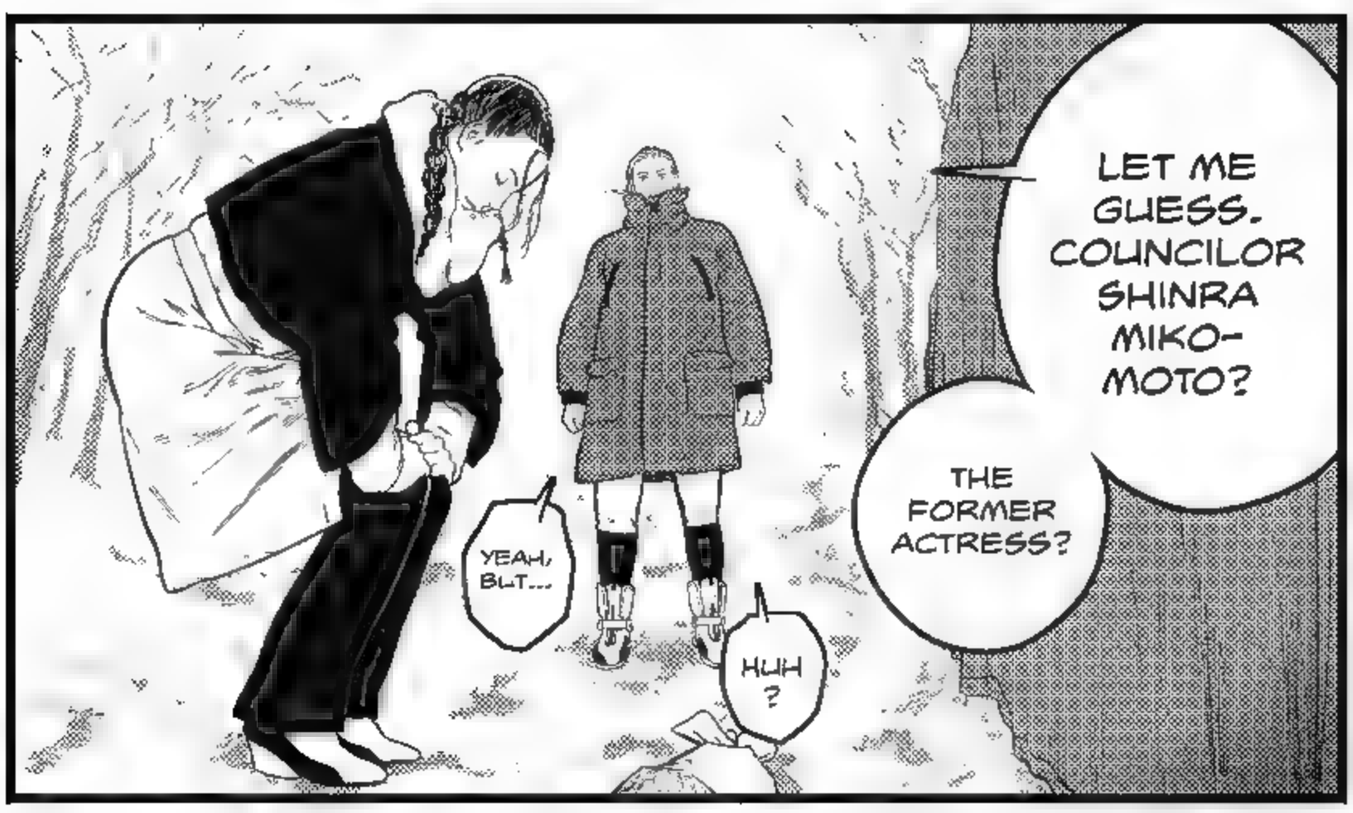
KRNCH


KRNCH
NO DUMPING
KRNCH
TOWADA CITY

!


IT'S JUST, YOU LOOK A LOT LIKE SOMEONE I KNOW...
FLUSTER
FLUSTER
OH! UH, NO!
UM, CAN I HELP YOU?
AND ...


IT CAN'T BE. COUNCILOR MIKOMOTO?!


LET ME GUESS. COUNCILOR SHINRA MIKO-MOTO?
THE FORMER ACTRESS?
YEAH, BUT...
HUH ?

SHINRA'S MY ELDER SISTER.
WOW.

MY STEP-FATHER'S BODY WAS DISCOVERED AMONG THE ONES DUMPED HERE.

NOT THAT WE'RE CLOSE. OUR PARENTS DIVORCED WHEN WE WERE YOUNG.

SHE LIVED WITH ONE, AND I LIVED WITH THE OTHER. WE HAVEN'T SEEN EACH OTHER SINCE.

YEAH, THAT'S RIGHT.

AN OLD COWORKER OF MINE.

DID YOU KNOW ONE OF THE DECEASED, TOO?

OH, I'M SORRY FOR YOUR LOSS.

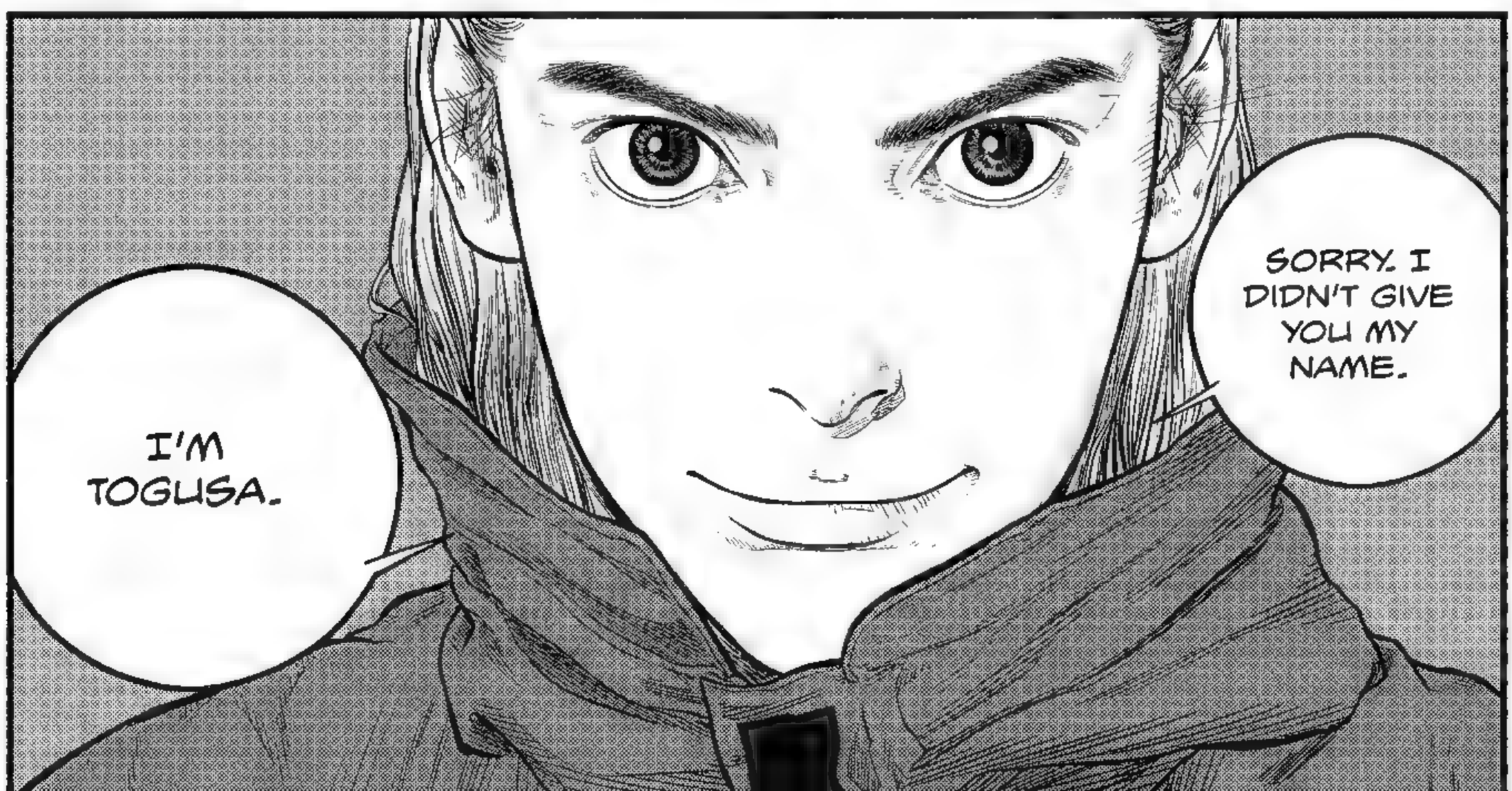
AND WAS THAT COWORKER ALSO A BELIEVER OF ATERUI?

IT'S A RELIGIOUS MOVEMENT. MY STEP-FATHER WAS AN ADHERENT.
I WANTED TO KNOW MORE ABOUT HIS DEATH, SO I CAME HERE TO INVESTIGATE.
ATERUI...?

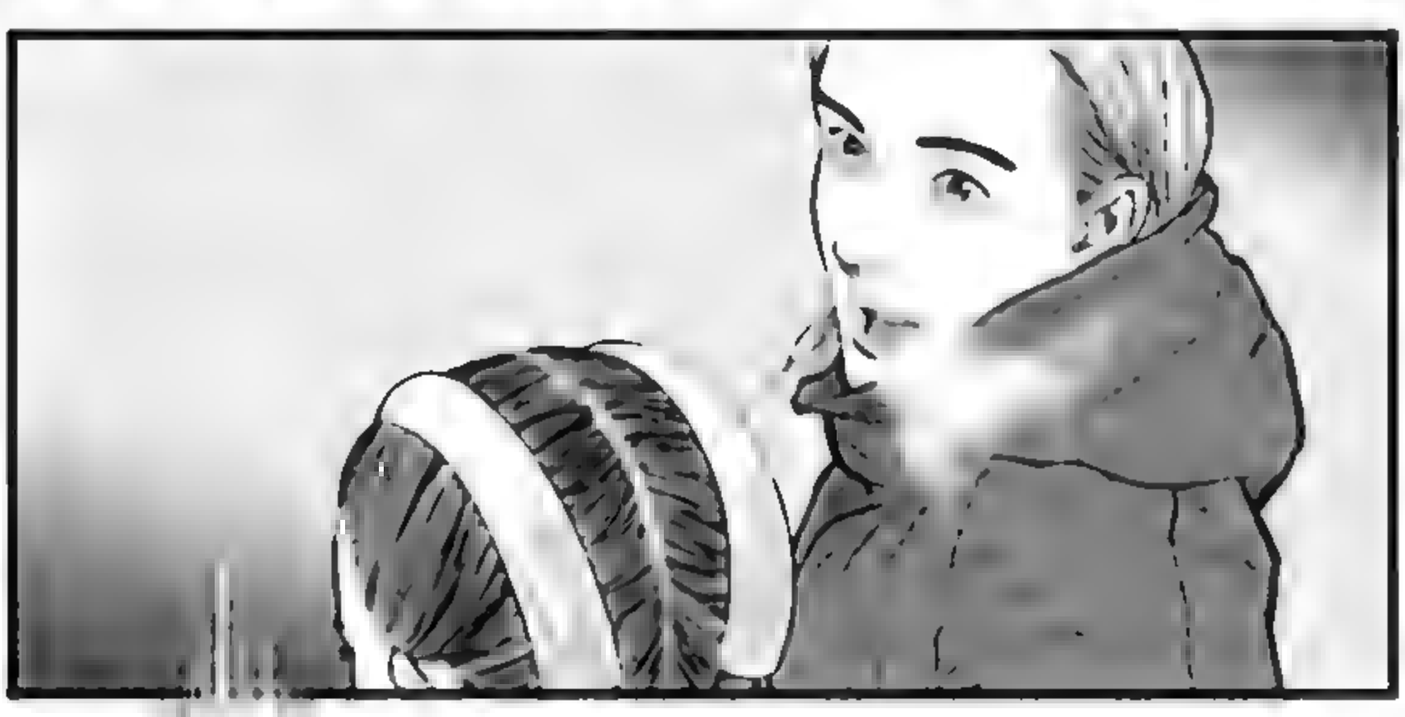
...

SWEET!
OF COURSE. PLEASE FEEL FREE.

WOULD YOU MIND IF I CAME ALONG?
I'D LIKE TO FIND OUT WHAT HAPPENED TO MY COWORKER, TOO.


SORRY. I DIDN'T GIVE YOU MY NAME.
I'M TOGUSA.

NICE TO MEET YOU. I'M MARI HASHIKAMI.



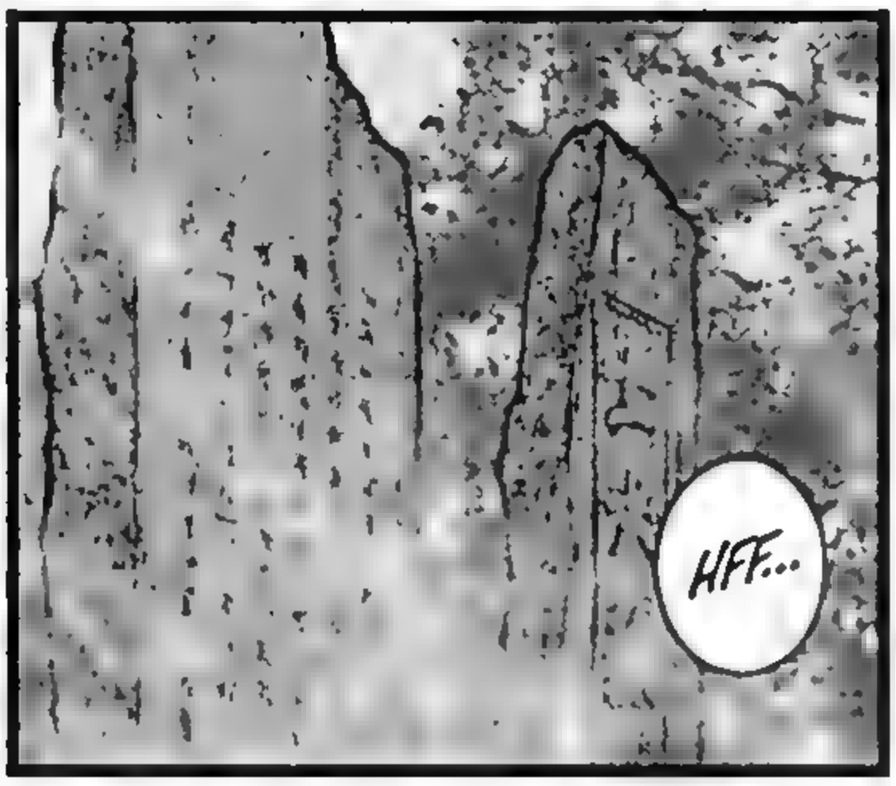
HFF...
HFF...

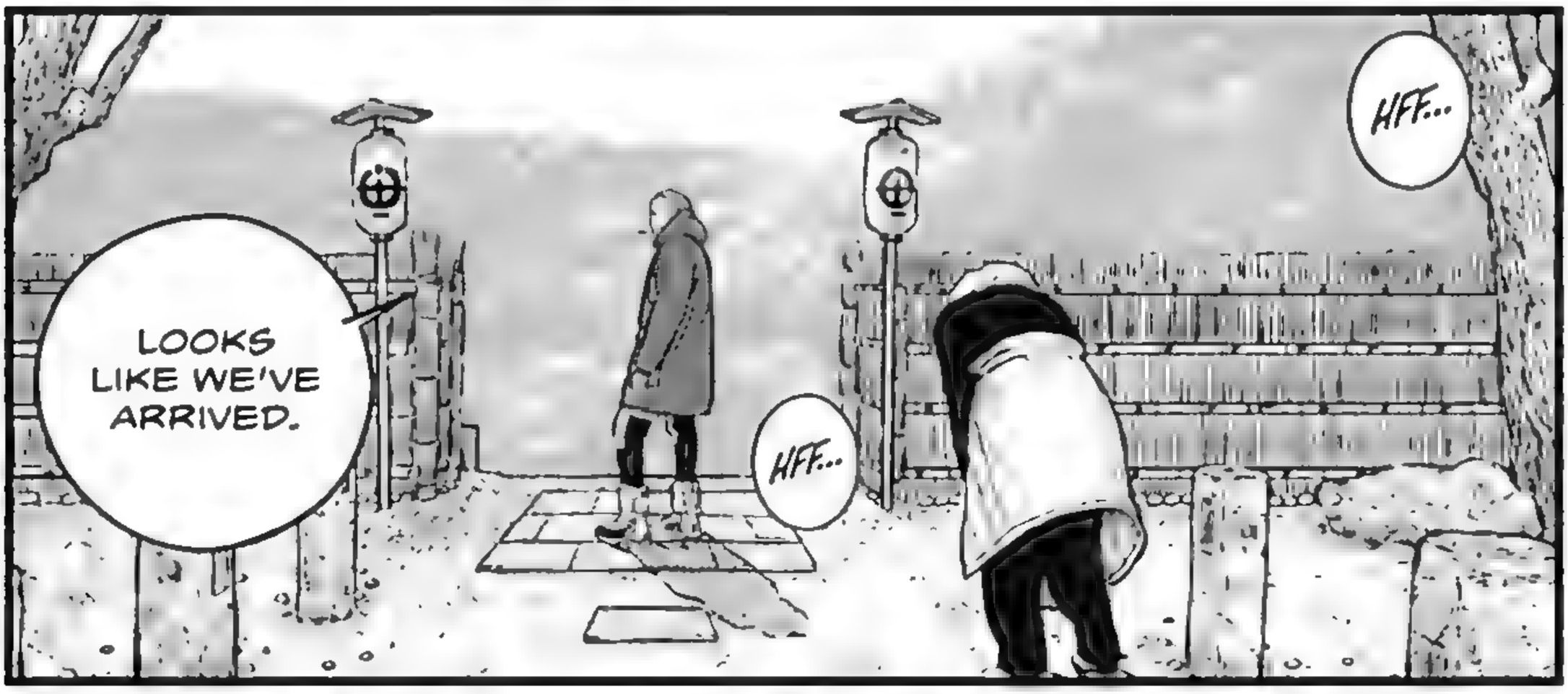
02

UNDERCOVER

HFF...
HFF...
I SUPPOSE YOUR STEP-FATHER MUST HAVE MADE THIS TREK A NUMBER OF TIMES, TOO.
MOST LIKELY. IT WOULD BE NICE IF OURS BRINGS ANSWERS.
HFF...
HFF...
YEAH. IT SOUNDS LIKE THIS RELIGION OF HIS... THIS ATERUI...
...MIGHT BE THE ONLY WINDOW INTO HIS DEATH.
I'M AFRAID SO.
BUT I MUST ADMIT I DIDN'T EXPECT THEIR VILLAGE TO BE SO REMOTE.
HFF...

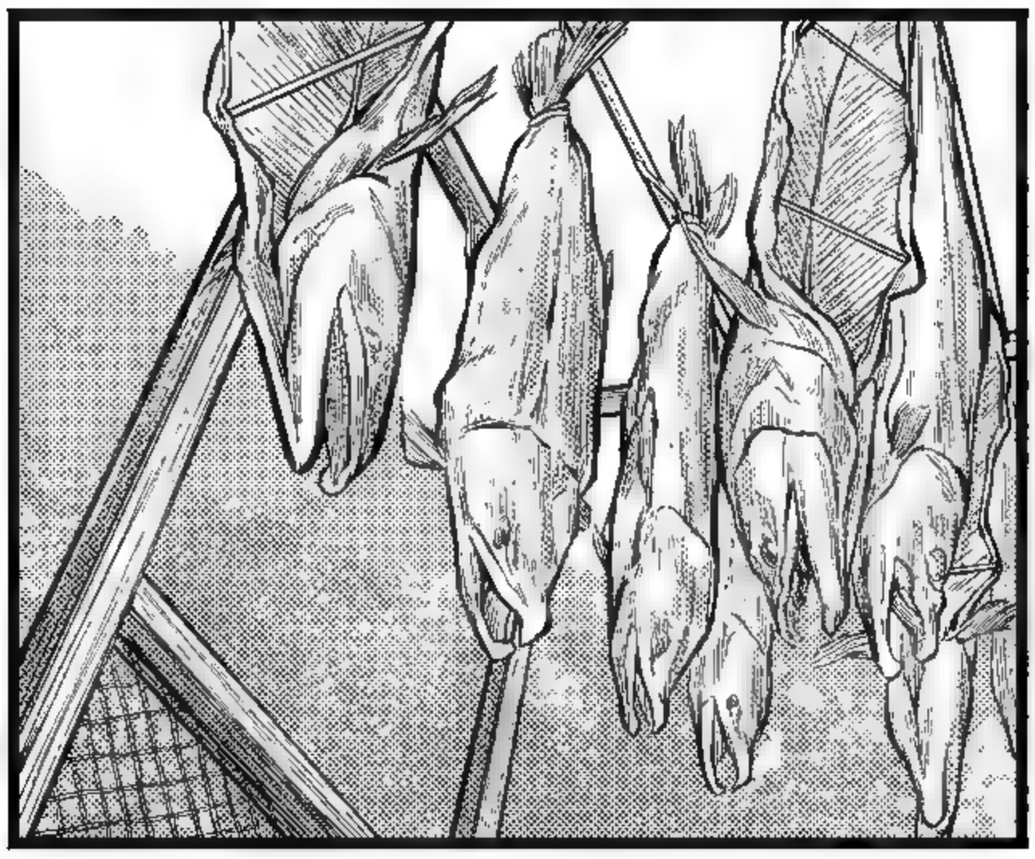
THIS PLACE SURE IS EERIE...

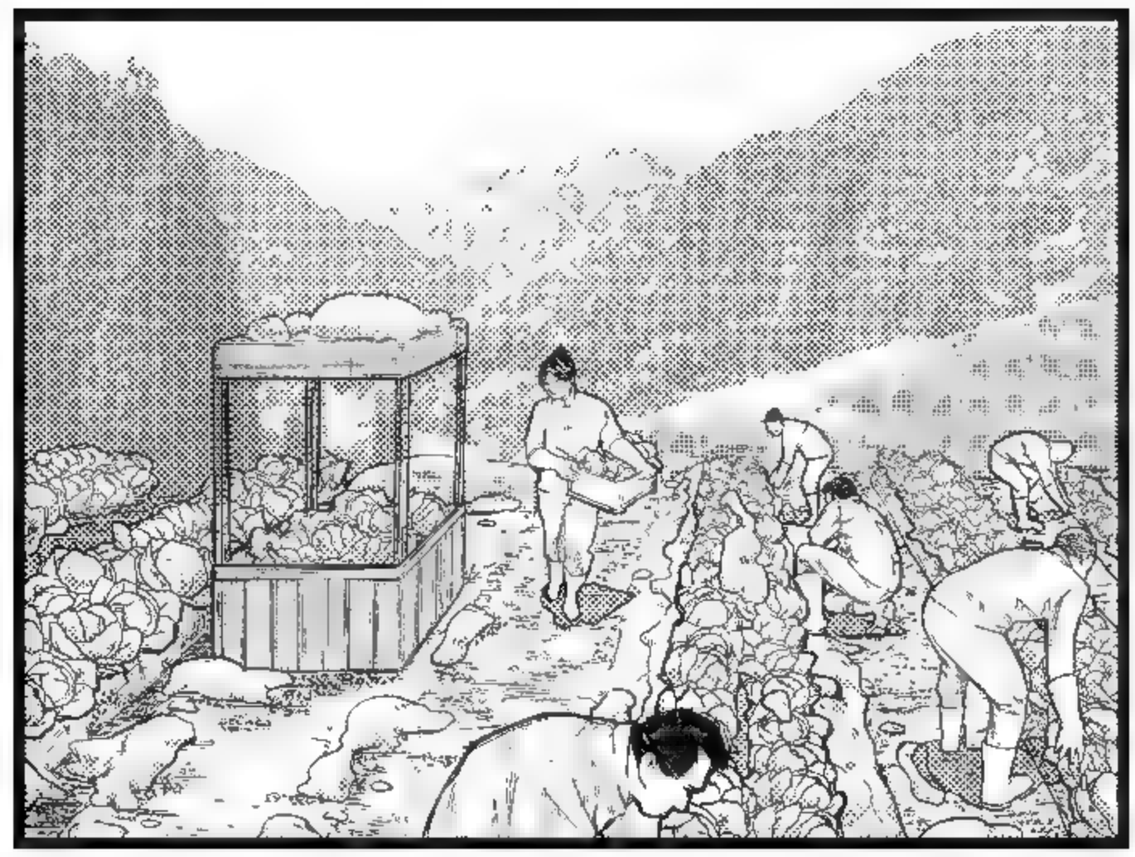

HFF...

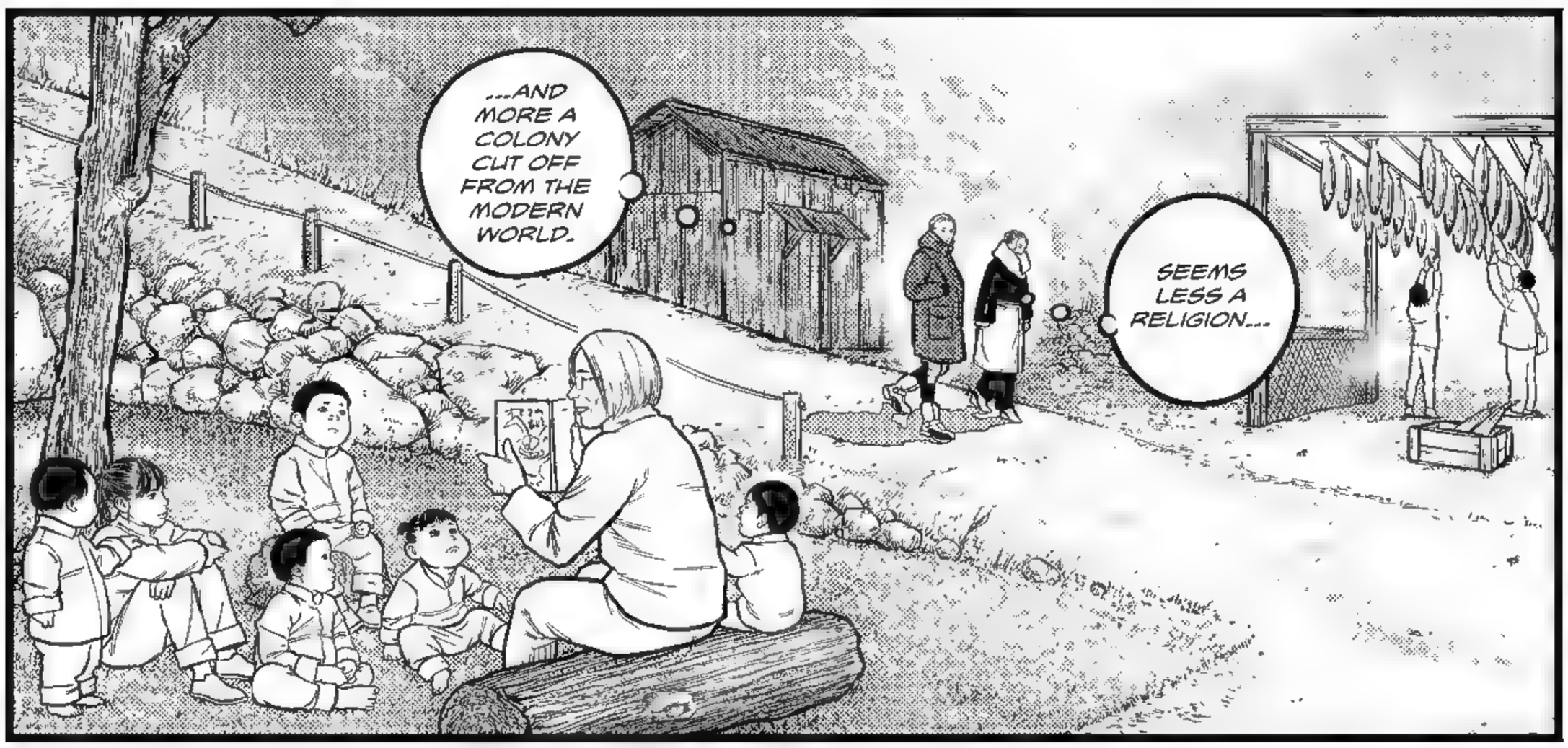

LOOKS LIKE WE'VE ARRIVED.
HFF...
HFF...

THIS MUST BE...

...THE VILLAGE OF ATERUI.

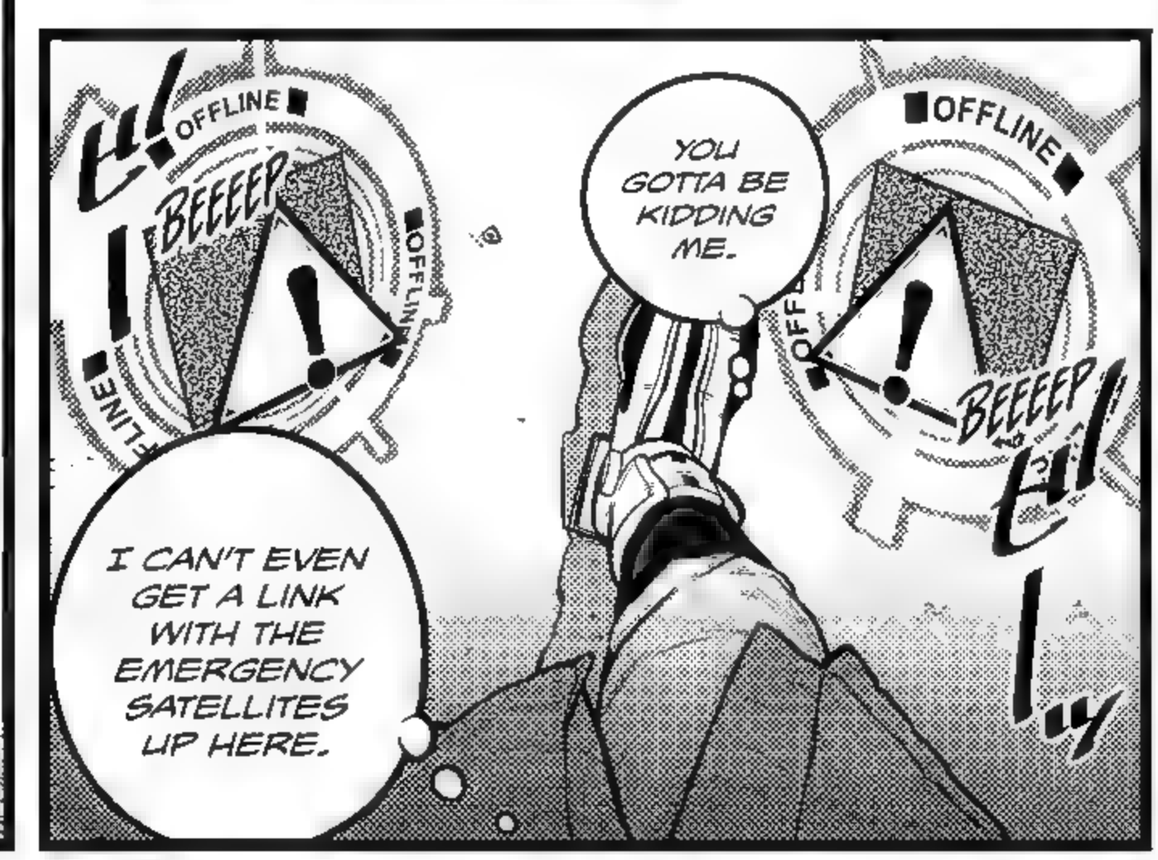





...AND MORE A COLONY CUT OFF FROM THE MODERN WORLD.
SEEMS LESS A RELIGION...

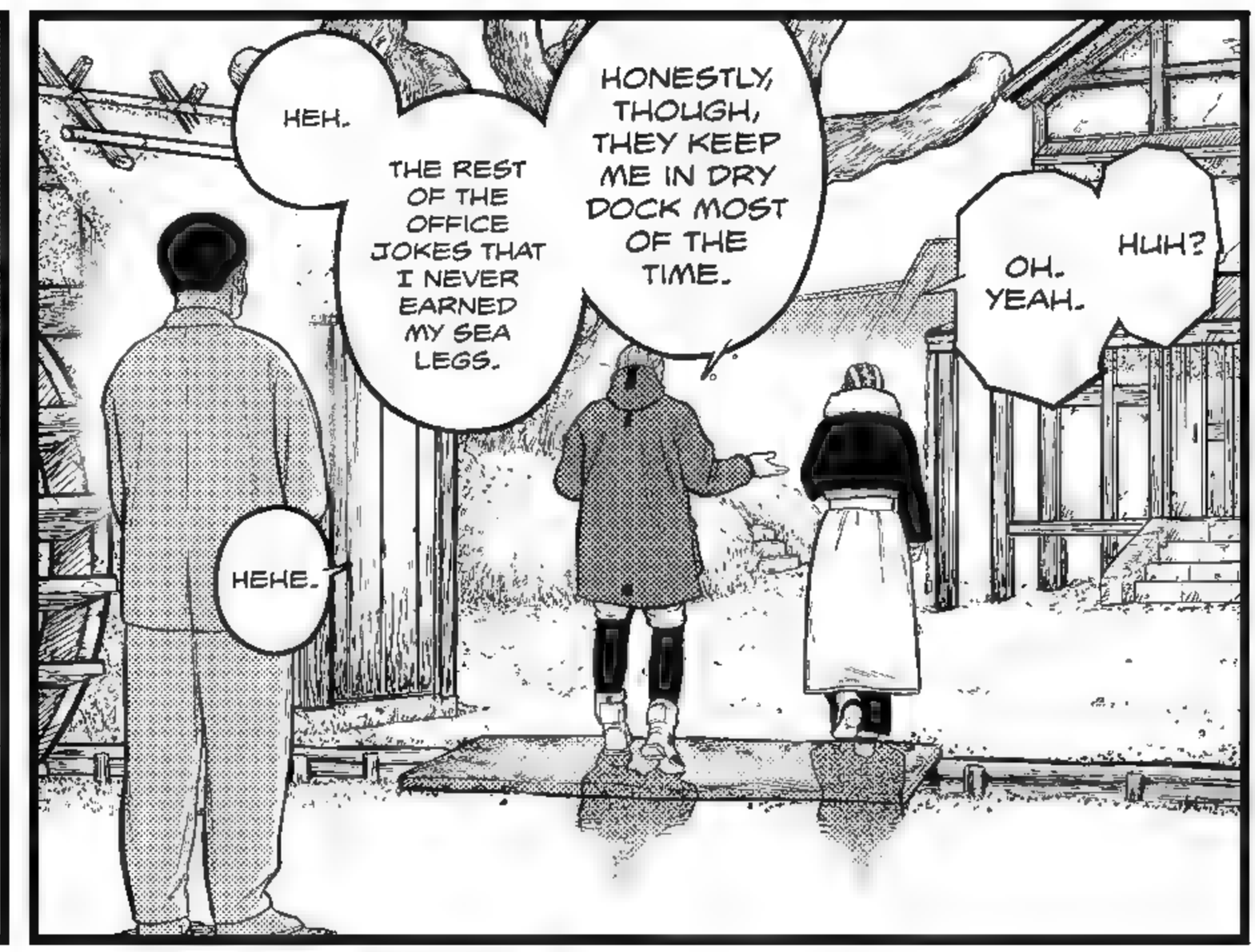
AH. HOW THOUGHT-FUL...
=非接続地区=
UNCONNECTED AREA
HM?

KSRKK...
!
WONDER IF THERE'S ANY INFO ON THE NET—


OFFLINE
BEEEEP
YOU GOTTA BE KIDDING ME.
I CAN'T EVEN GET A LINK WITH THE EMERGENCY SATELLITES UP HERE.

I WOULDN'T HAVE GUESSED THAT WAS YOUR LINE OF WORK.
MARINE SURVEYS, THOUGH.

PARDON, BUT MIGHT YOU BE MISS HA-SHIKAMI?

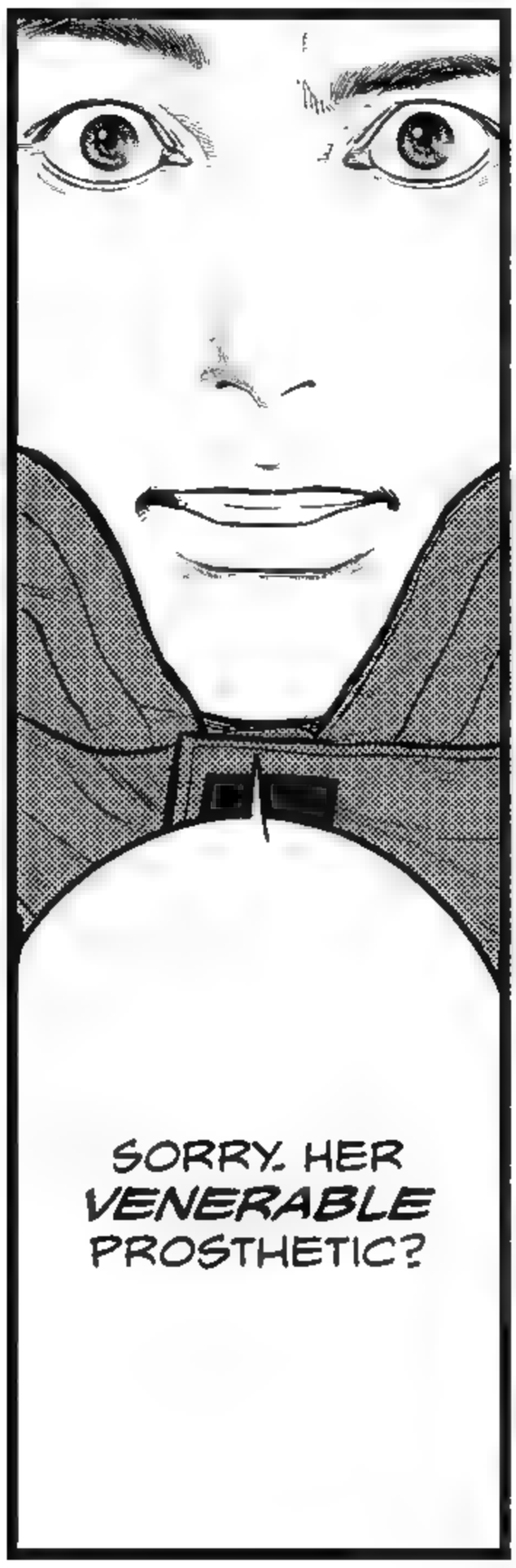

HEH.
THE REST OF THE OFFICE JOKES THAT I NEVER EARNED MY SEA LEGS.
HONESTLY, THOUGH, THEY KEEP ME IN DRY DOCK MOST OF THE TIME.
HEHE.
OH. YEAH.
HUH?

I HANDLE PUBLIC RELATIONS FOR ATERUI.
I AM YOSHIZAKI.

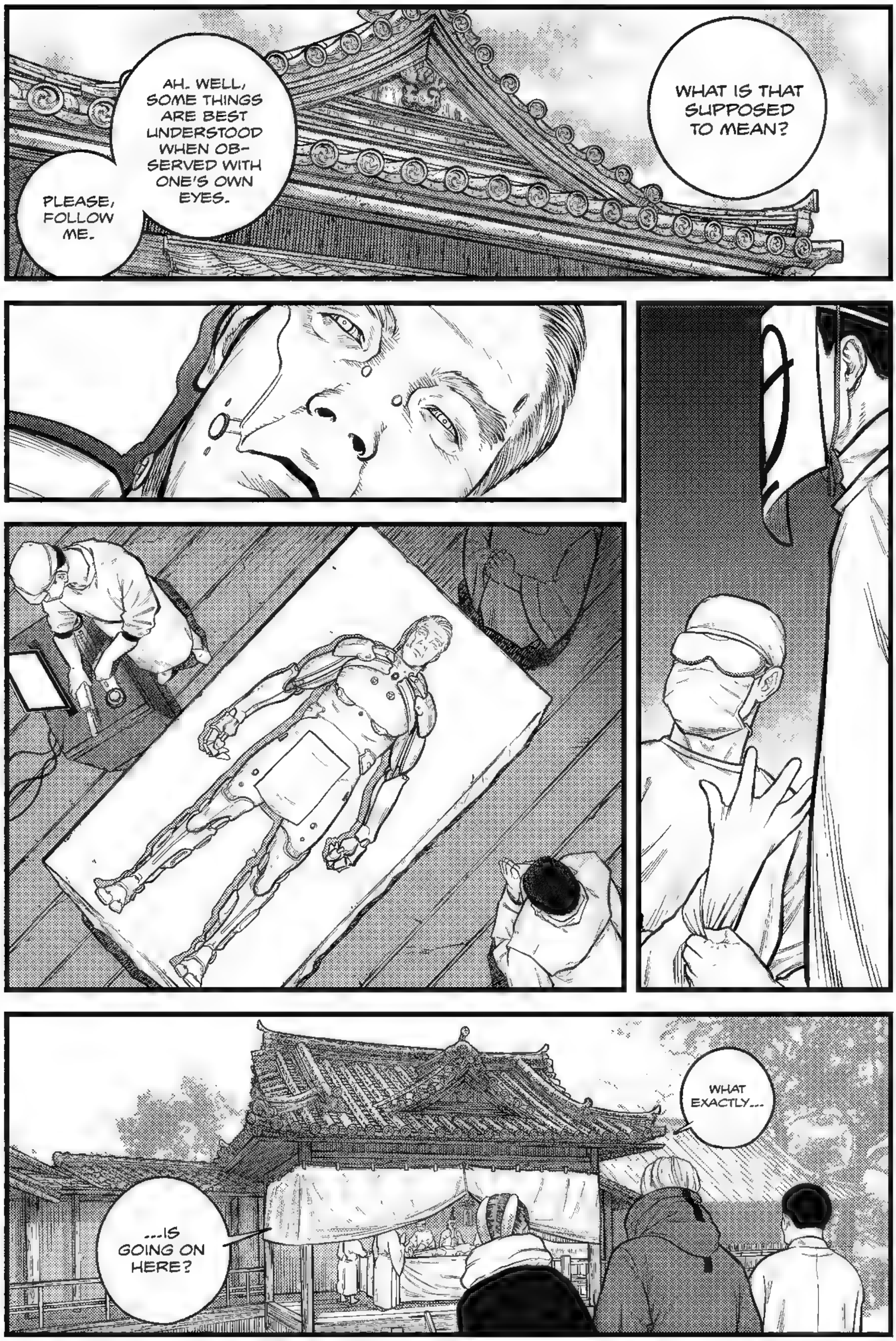
THAT'S CORRECT.
WRITTEN ON PAPER?
IN THIS DAY AND AGE?

...A LETTER ?!
WAIT...
YES. I'M MARI HA-SHIKAMI.
OH! THANK YOU AGAIN FOR THE LETTER YOU SENT.
FWAP

...
LIVING DISCONNECTED FROM THE NETWORKS IS ONE OF OUR FUNDAMENTAL PRECEPTS.
BUT OF COURSE.
I GOT SOME SAD NEWS ABOUT ONE OF MY COWORKERS. HER PROSTHETIC BODY WAS AMONG THE ONES AT THE DUMP SITE.
IT'S TOGUSA.
AH. SORRY.
I DON'T BELIEVE I CAUGHT YOUR NAME, MISTER...?

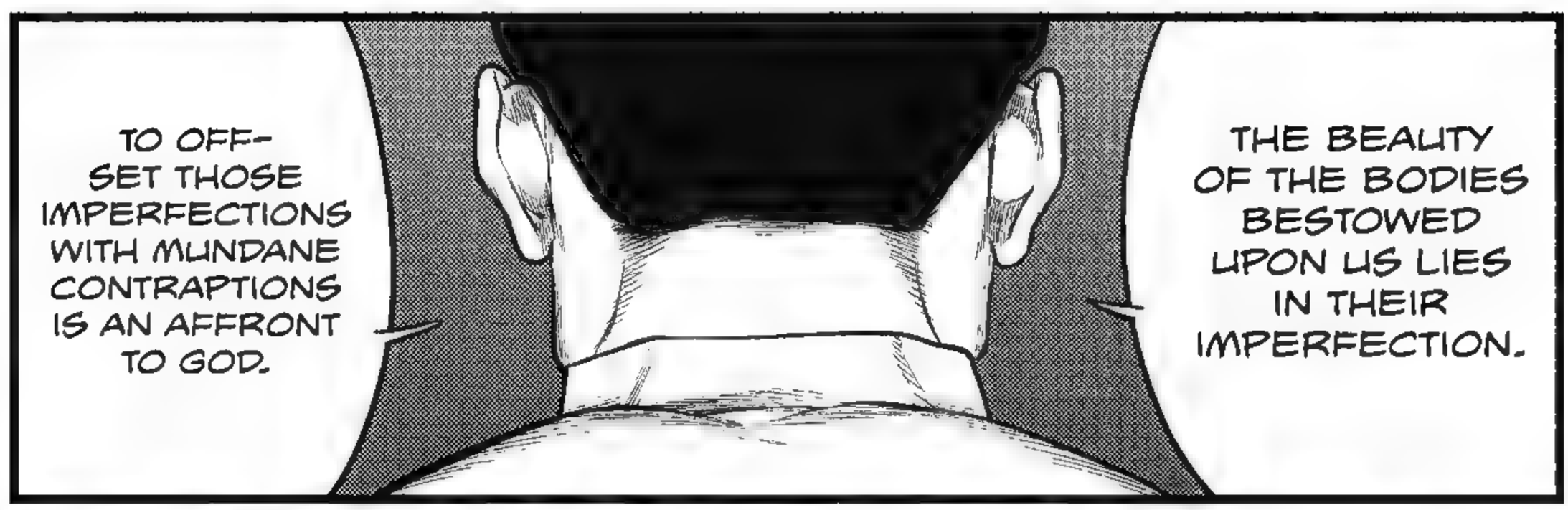

SORRY. HER *VENERABLE* PROSTHETIC?

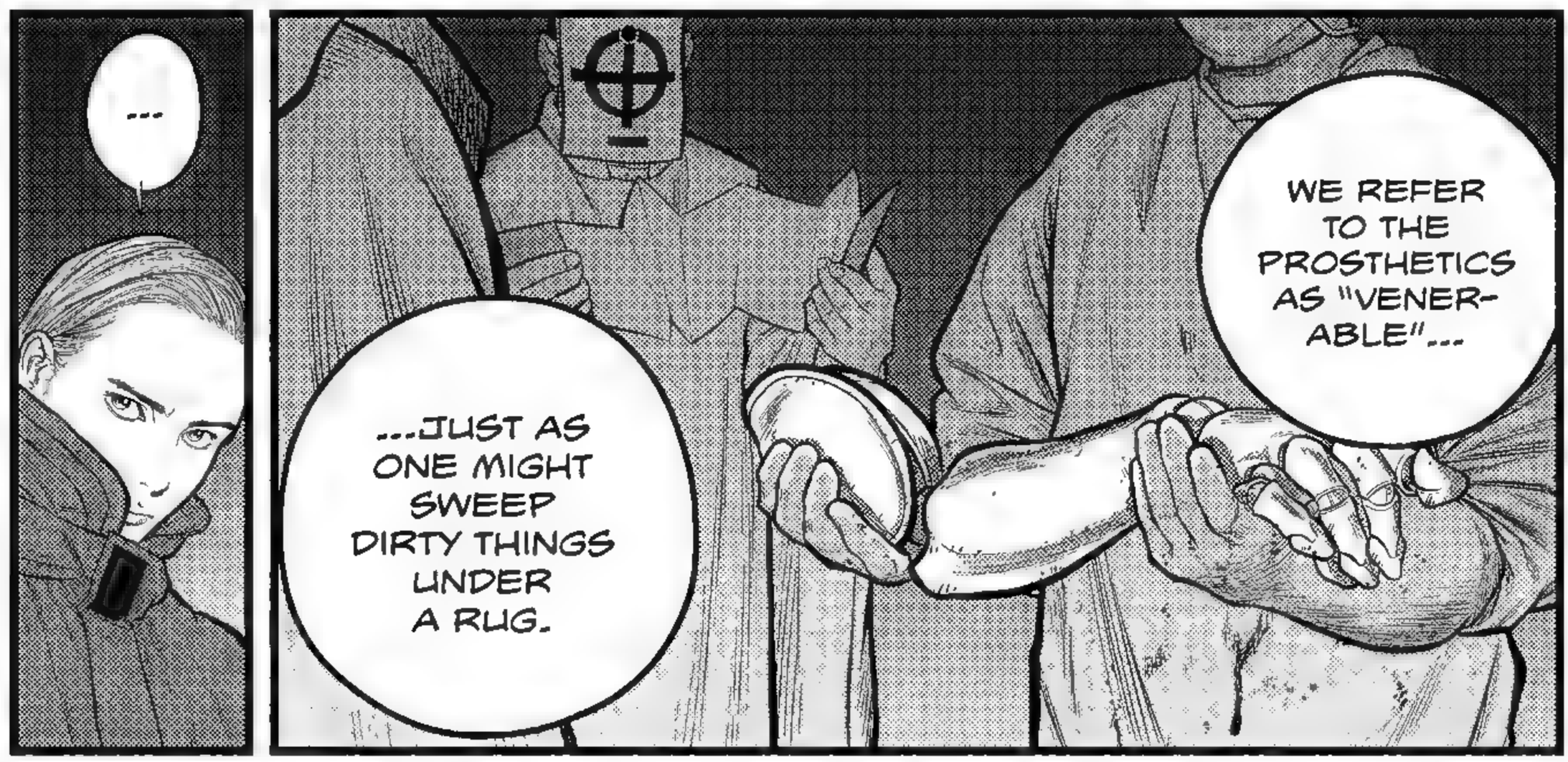
AH. IS THAT SO?
WE HAPPENED TO CROSS PATHS THERE. I INVITED HIM ALONG.
ATERUI WELCOMES ALL IN NEED WITH OPEN ARMS.
!
WE SHALL BE HAPPY TO PROVIDE ANY INFORMATION WE HAVE...
...ABOUT YOUR ASSOCIATE'S VENERABLE PROSTHETIC.


PLEASE, FOLLOW ME.
AH. WELL, SOME THINGS ARE BEST UNDERSTOOD WHEN OB-SERVED WITH ONE'S OWN EYES.
WHAT IS THAT SUPPOSED TO MEAN?
WHAT EXACTLY...
...IS GOING ON HERE?

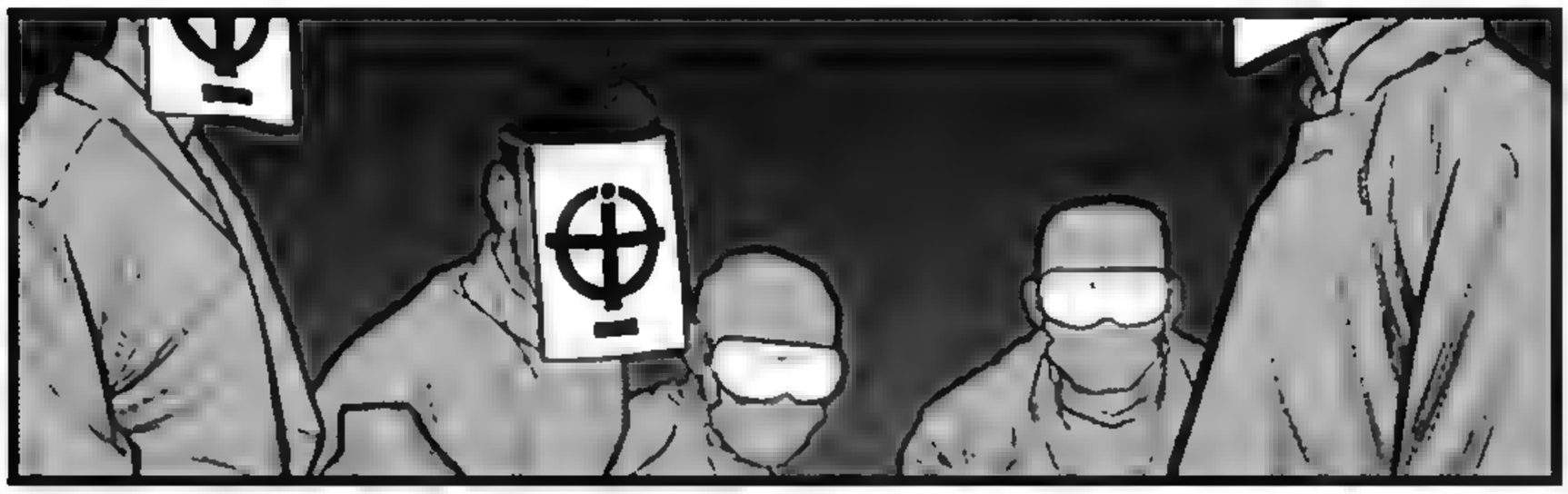
AS YOU KNOW, WE LIVE IN AN AGE OF RELENTLESS PROSTHETICI-ZATION.
MISTER TOGUSA.
DIIIING
AS ADHERENTS OF ATERUI, WE HARBOR AN INTENSE AVERSION TO SUCH PRACTICES.
BZZZZZZ

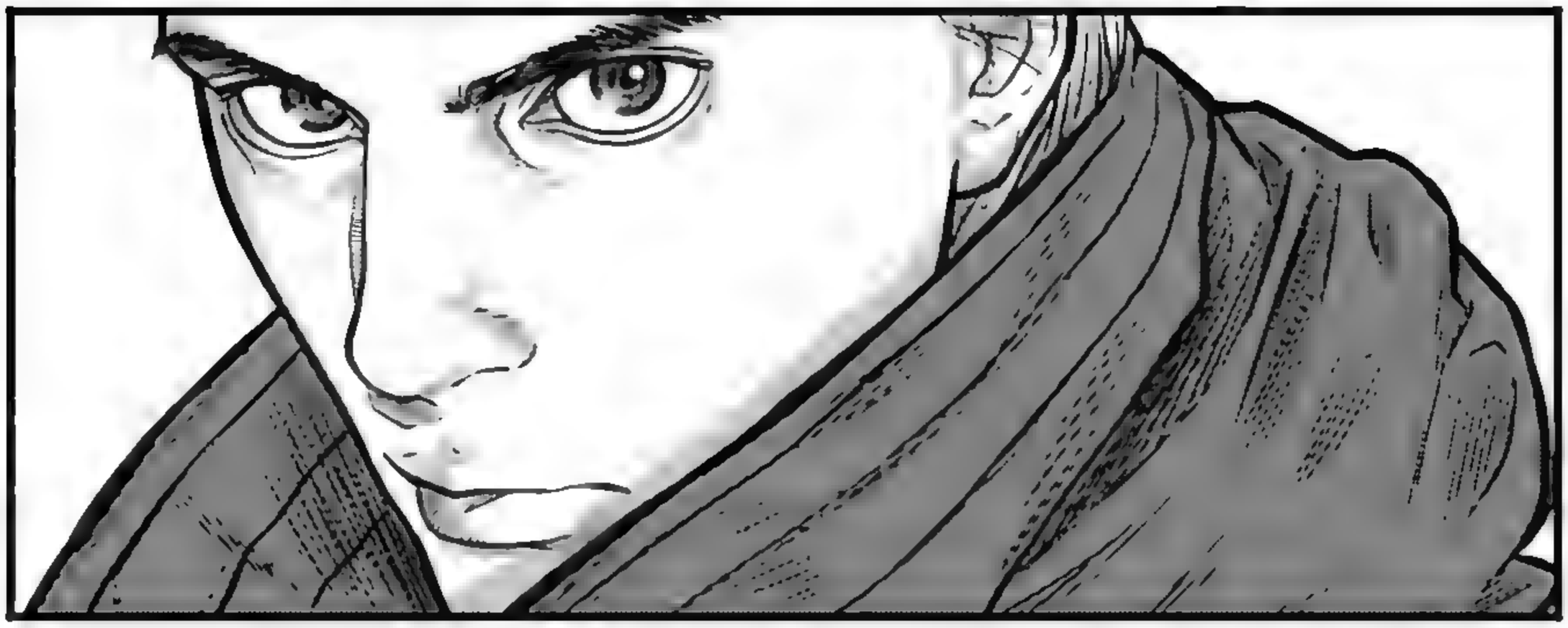
YOU'RE DISAS-SEMBLING HIM?!
EEK!
WHY ON EARTH ...?


TO OFF-SET THOSE IMPERFECTIONS WITH MUNDANE CONTRAPTIONS IS AN AFFRONT TO GOD.
THE BEAUTY OF THE BODIES BESTOWED UPON US LIES IN THEIR IMPERFECTION.

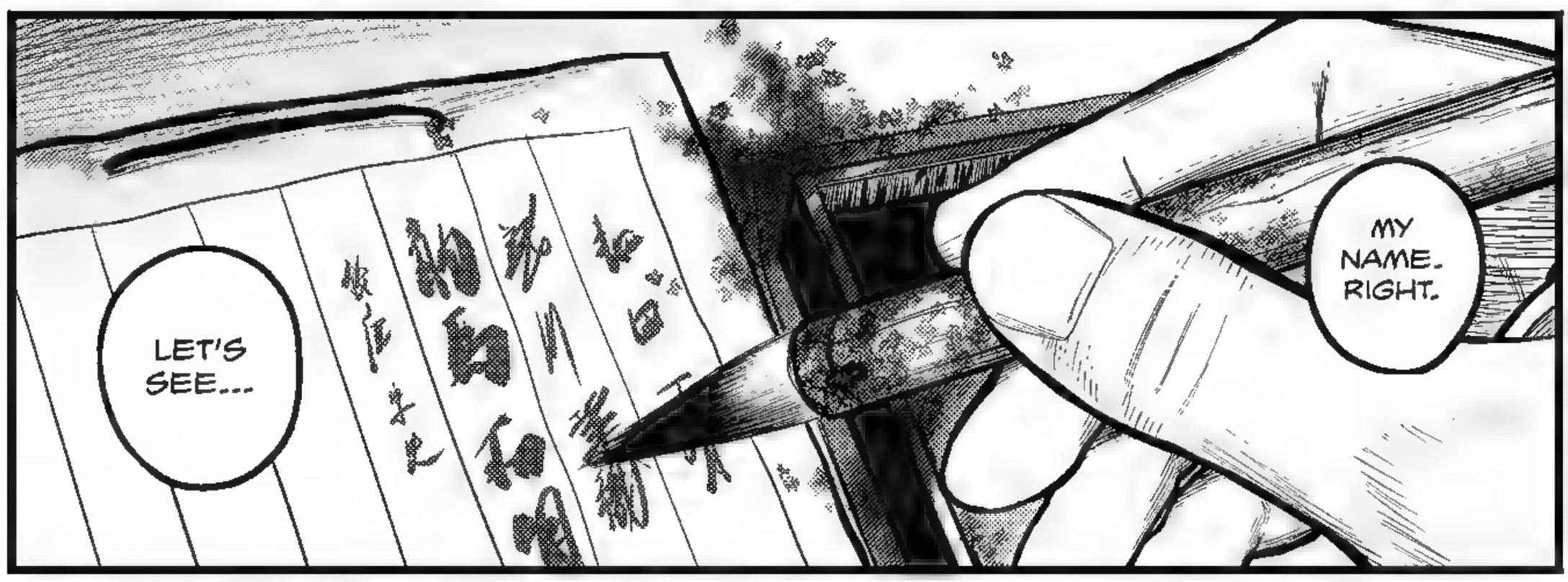

...
...JUST AS ONE MIGHT SWEEP DIRTY THINGS UNDER A RUG.
WE REFER TO THE PROSTHETICS AS "VENER-ABLE"...

A PURIFICATION, SO THAT IT MIGHT AT LAST MAKE ITS WAY TO THE REALM BEYOND.
THE RITE ALLOWS SOUL TO BE FREED FROM MECHANICAL VESSEL.



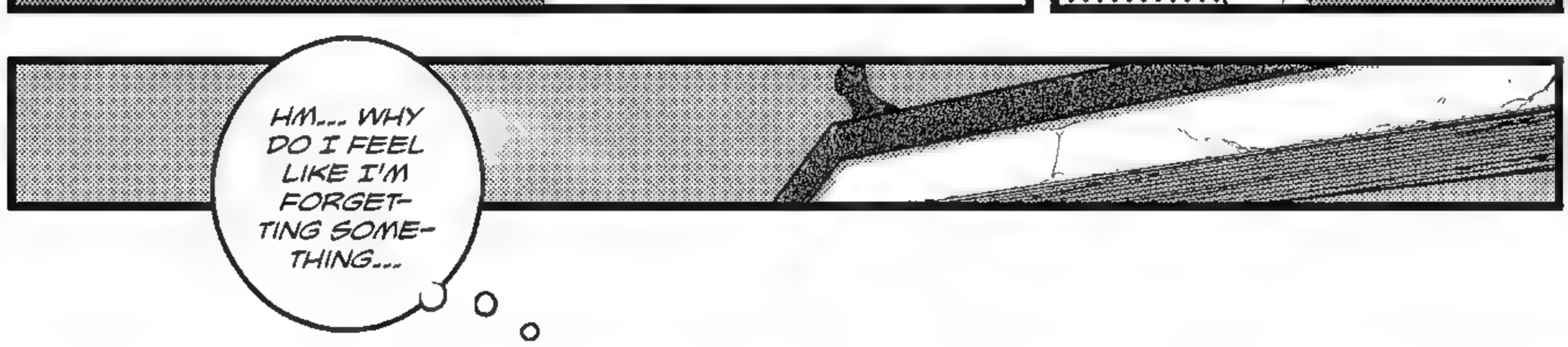


PLEASE ACCOMPANY ME TO THE TEMPLE, WHERE YOU MAY SIGN IN.
I AM SURE THE OFFICIANT WOULD BE HAPPY TO SHARE FURTHER ENLIGHTENMENT.

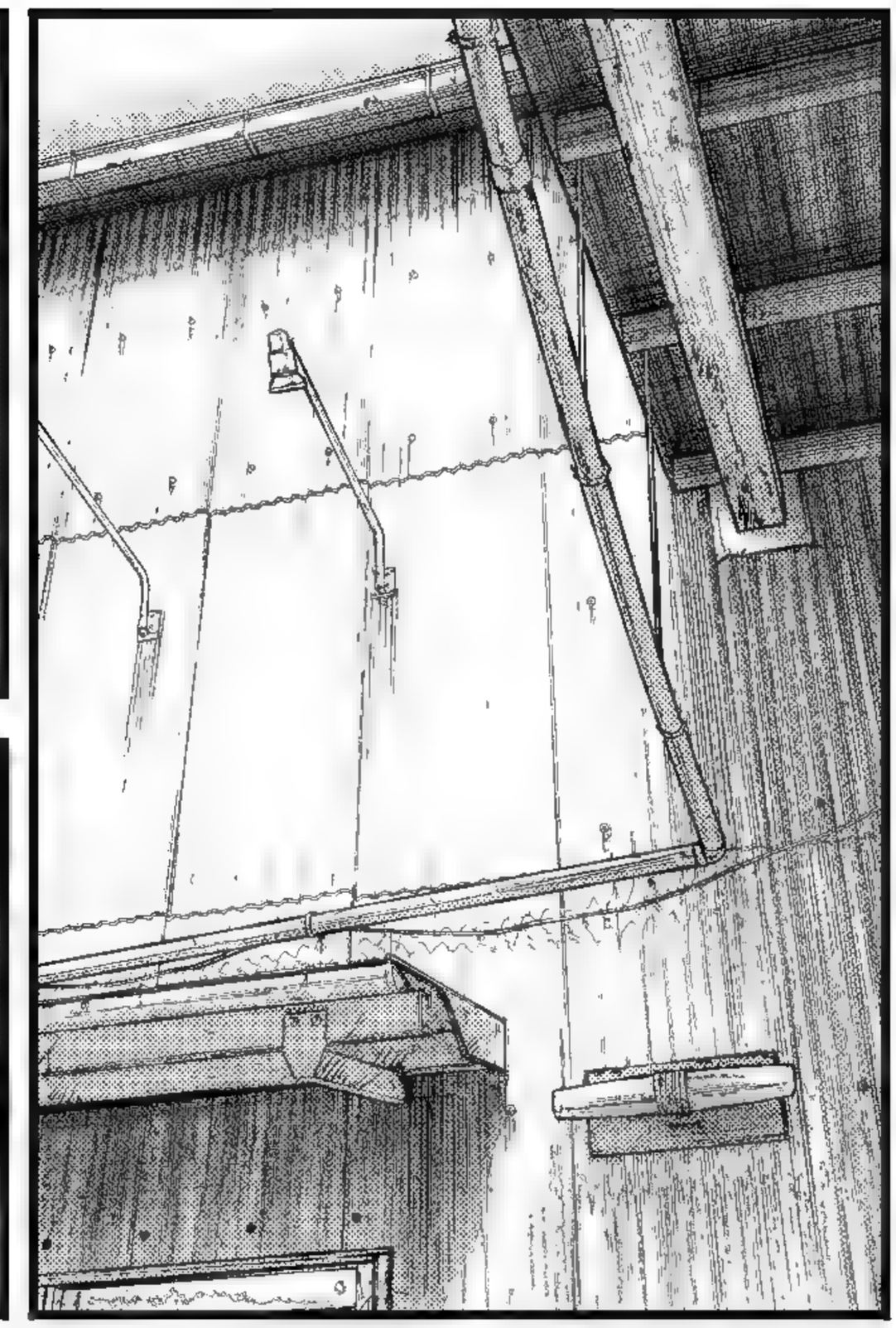

LET'S SEE...
MY NAME. RIGHT.

HAVEN'T DONE THIS SINCE I WAS IN SCHOOL.
GEEZ.
YOUR PENMANSHIP IS... LOVELY.

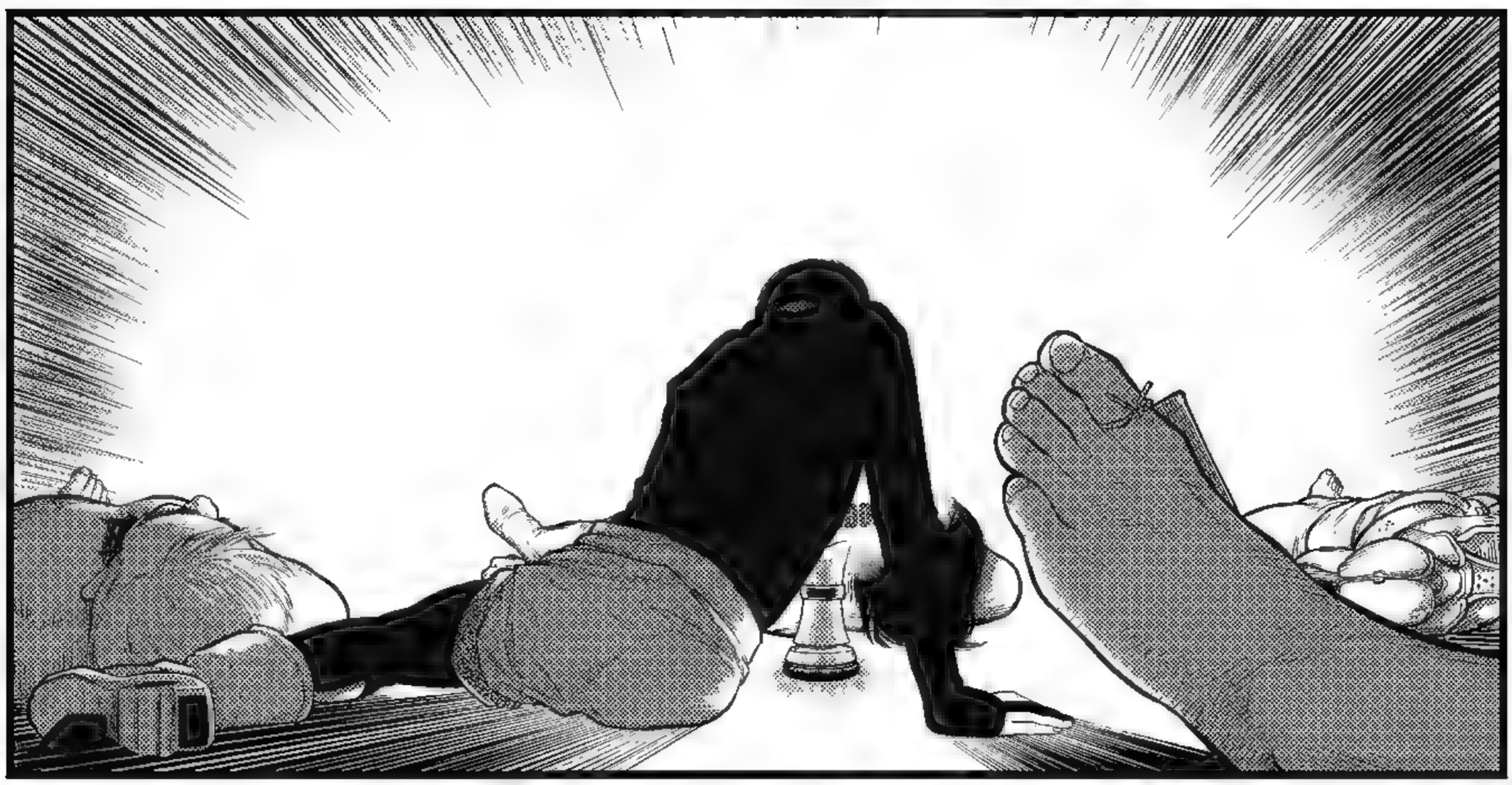
REMIND ME WHY I'M USING A BRUSH?
WE KEEP OUR RECORDS BY HAND.
IN THIS DAY AND AGE?
IT IS A PRECEPT.


HM... WHY DO I FEEL LIKE I'M FORGETTING SOMETHING...

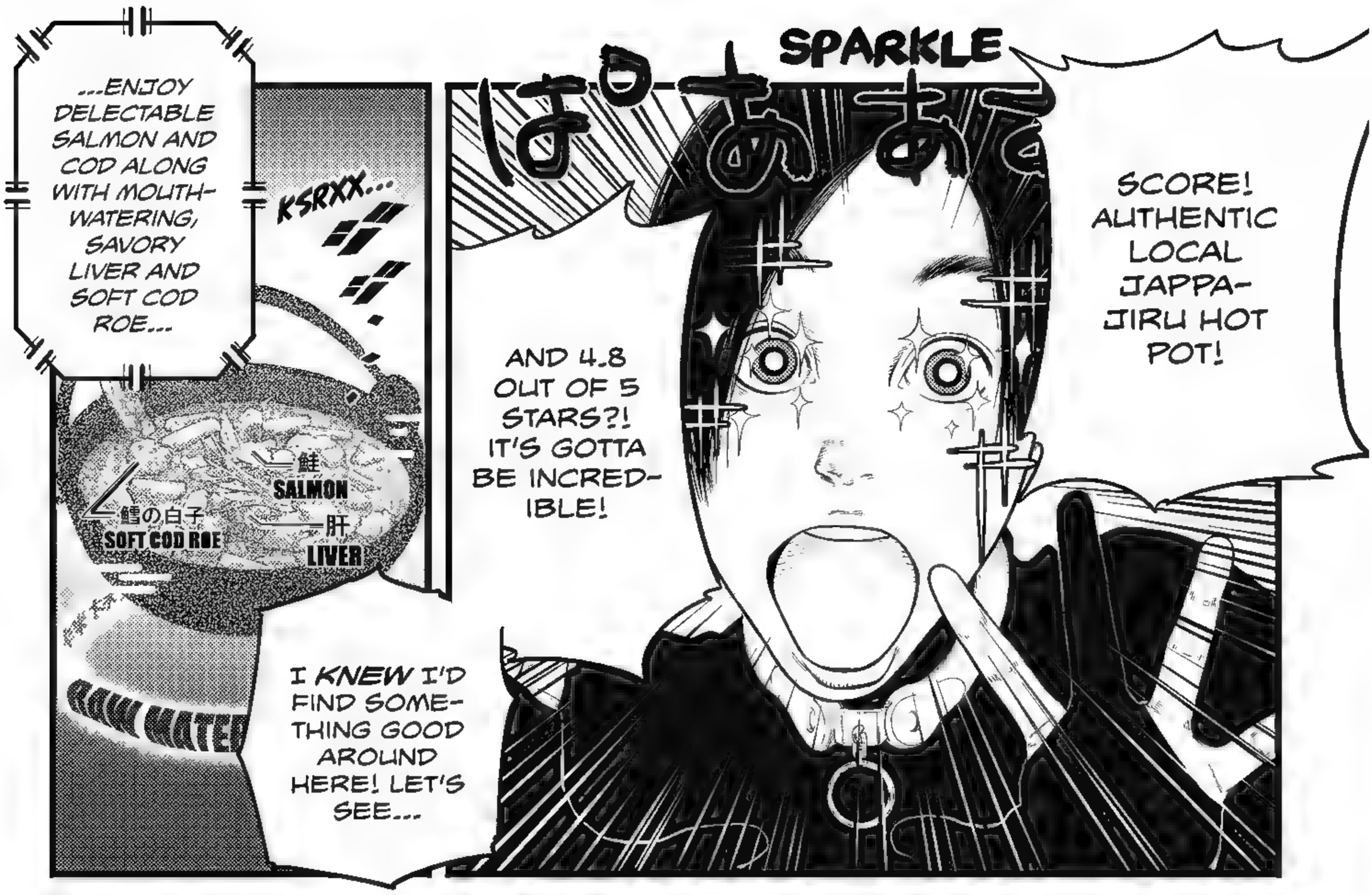
NO WAY...



HOLOGRAM
KS-RXX...



THIS IS HUGE.
I DON'T BELIEVE IT.

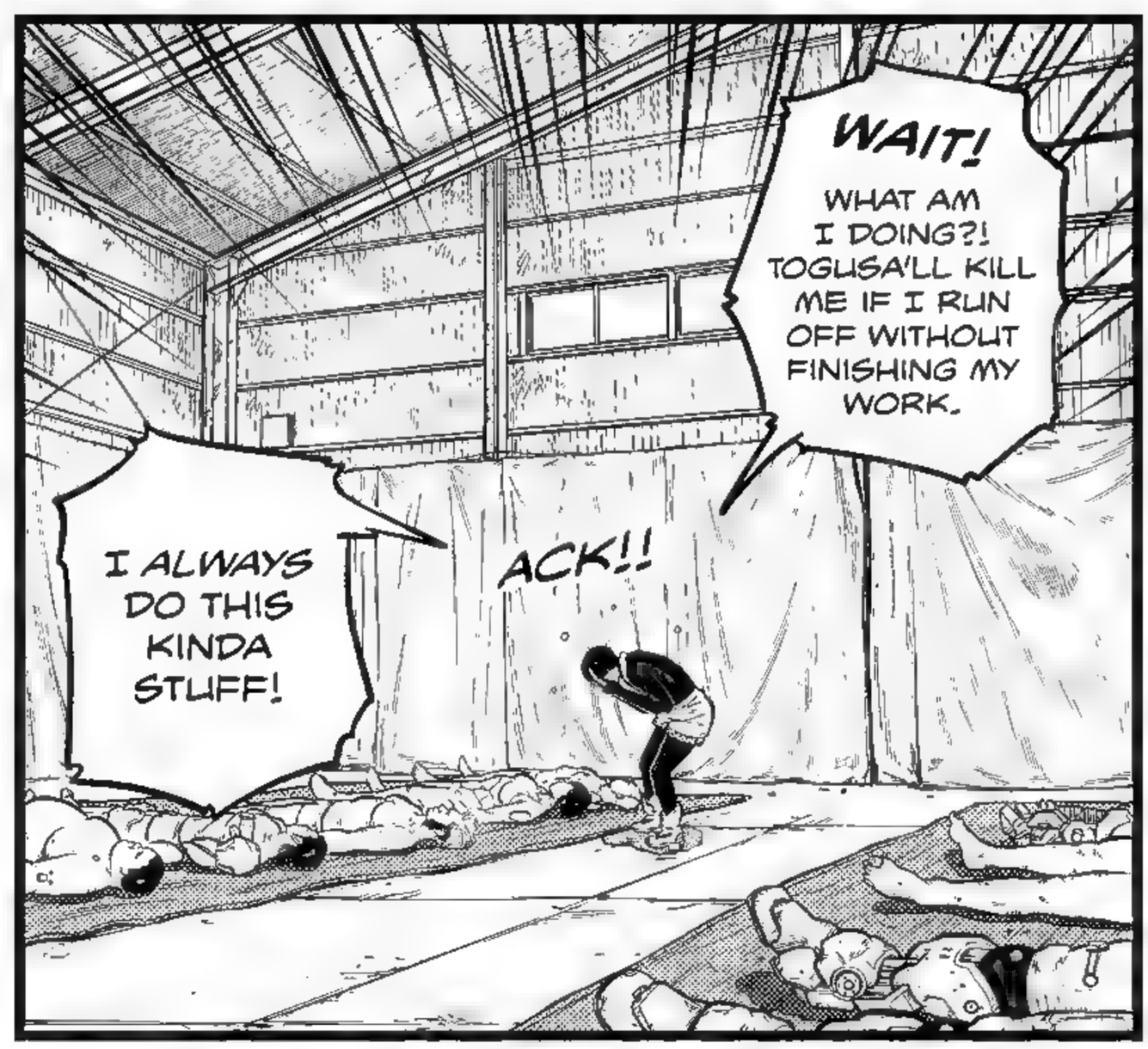

...ENJOY DELECTABLE SALMON AND COD ALONG WITH MOUTH-WATERING, SAVORY LIVER AND SOFT COD ROE...
KSRXX...
鮭
SALMON
鱈の白子
SOFT COD ROE
肝
LIVER
SPARKLE
AND 4.8 OUT OF 5 STARS?! IT'S GOTTA BE INCRED-IBLE!
SCORE! AUTHENTIC LOCAL JAPPA-JIRU HOT POT!
I KNEW I'D FIND SOME-THING GOOD AROUND HERE! LET'S SEE...

THIS IS WHAT MAKES FIELD ASSIGN-MENTS WORTH IT!
YEAH!
WHOOOO!!
TOTALLY DIGGIN' THIS CHANCE TO DIG IN!

SNIFFLE!
WHAT'S TOGUSA UP TO, ANY-WAY?!
I'VE BEEN TRYING TO CALL HIM FOR AGES!

HM. AM I FOR-GETTING SOME-THING?
BET HE'S ALL LIKE...

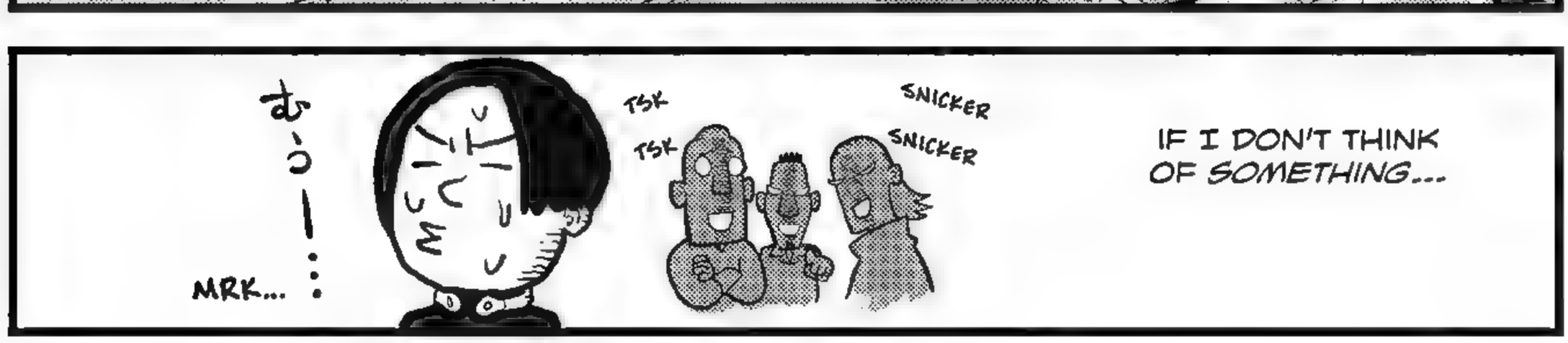
...AND OFF HAVING FUN.


WAIT!
WHAT AM I DOING?! TOGUSA'LL KILL ME IF I RUN OFF WITHOUT FINISHING MY WORK.
I ALWAYS DO THIS KINDA STUFF!
ACK!!

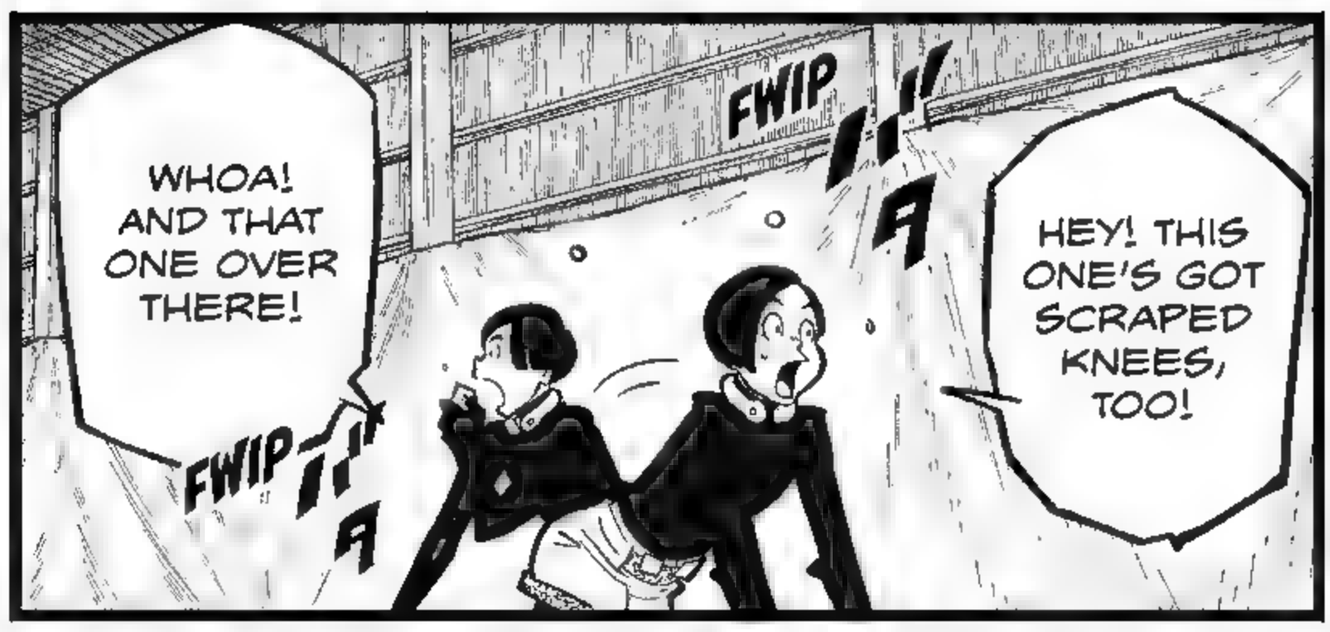
NOT A CLUE HOW THE PROSTHETICS WERE TRANS-PORTED UP HERE.

WHRR
RIGHT. GET A LEAD ON THE TRUCK USED TO DUMP THE BODIES.
ANYWAY, WHERE WAS I?
THE NETS AREN'T HELPING. I WIDENED THE SEARCH AND STILL CAME UP EMPTY.
FLICKER

SO WHERE DO I GO FROM HERE?
WHAT ELSE CAN I ACCOMPLISH ON MY OWN?


むぅー!...
MRK...
TSK
TSK
SNICKER
SNICKER
IF I DON'T THINK OF SOMETHING...

...GIMME SOME KINDA HINT.
C'MON, MAJOR KUSANAGI...
?!


WHOA! AND THAT ONE OVER THERE!
FWIP
FWIP
HEY! THIS ONE'S GOT SCRAPED KNEES, TOO!

WHY ARE HER KNEES ALL SCRAPED UP?
IT'S LIKE SOMEONE DRAGGED HER.

FWISH

HUM-MM...
DANGLE...

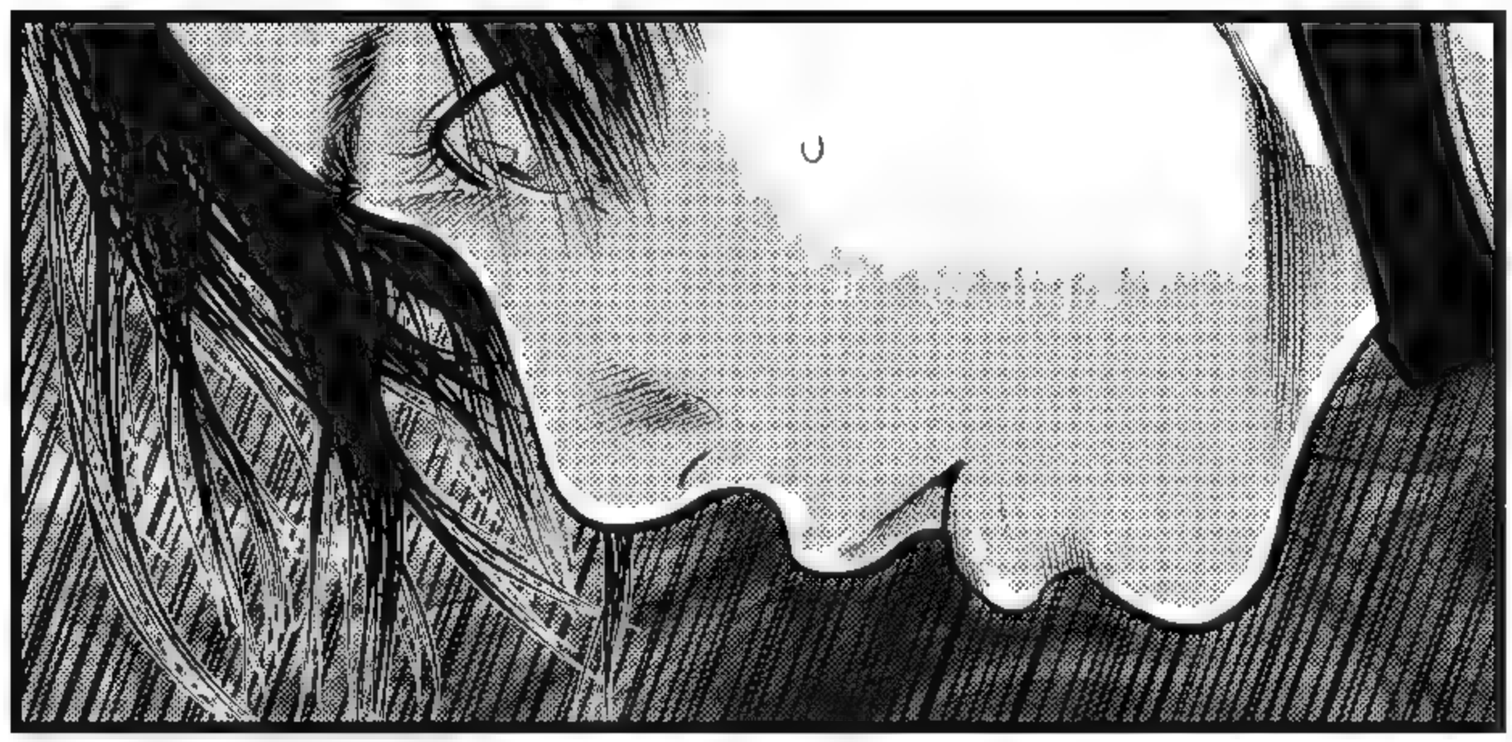
...WHAT GOT ME A SPOT IN SECTION 9.
TIME TO SHOW THOSE GUYS...

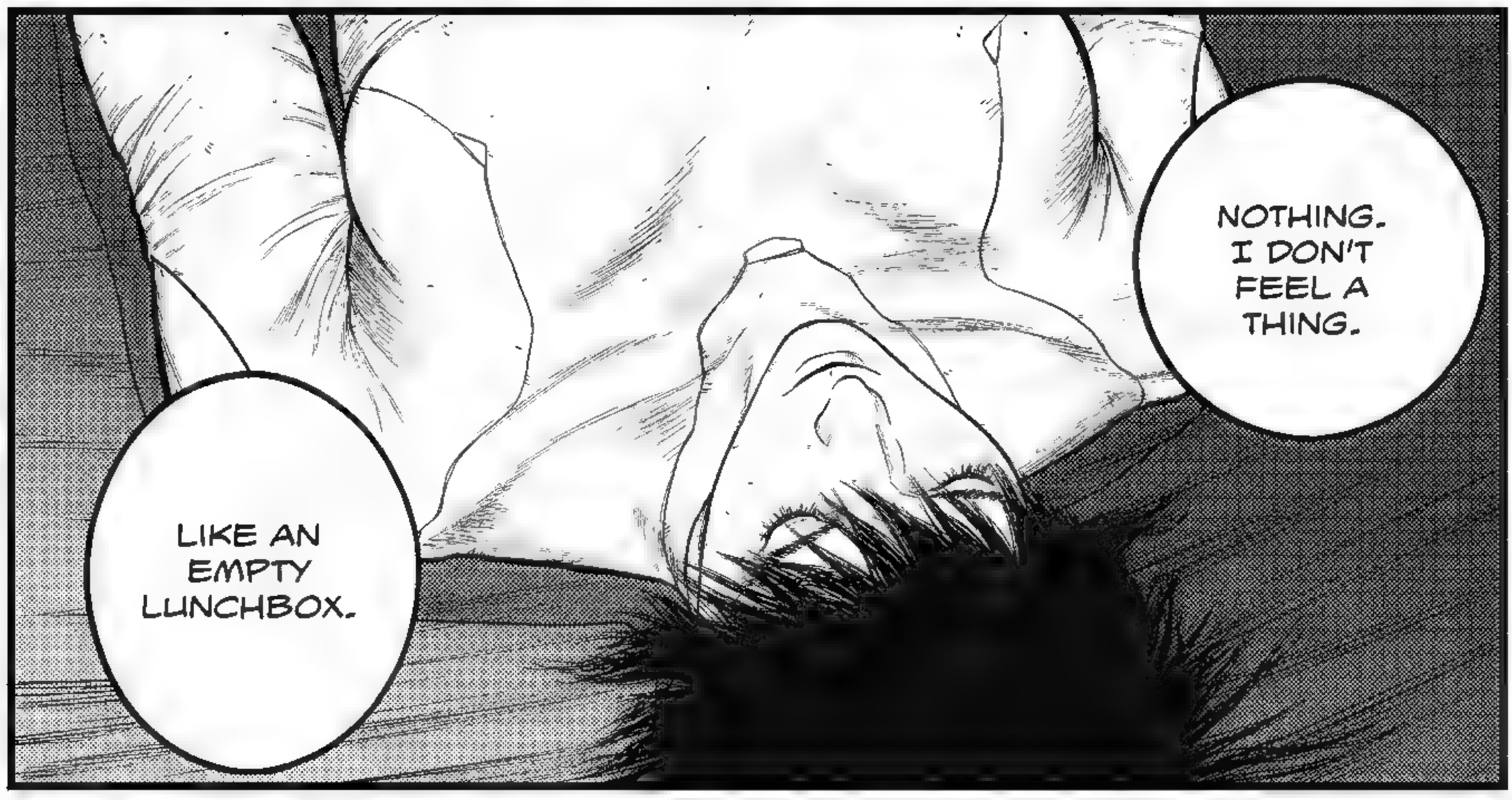
...IN THE SHELL RESIDING...

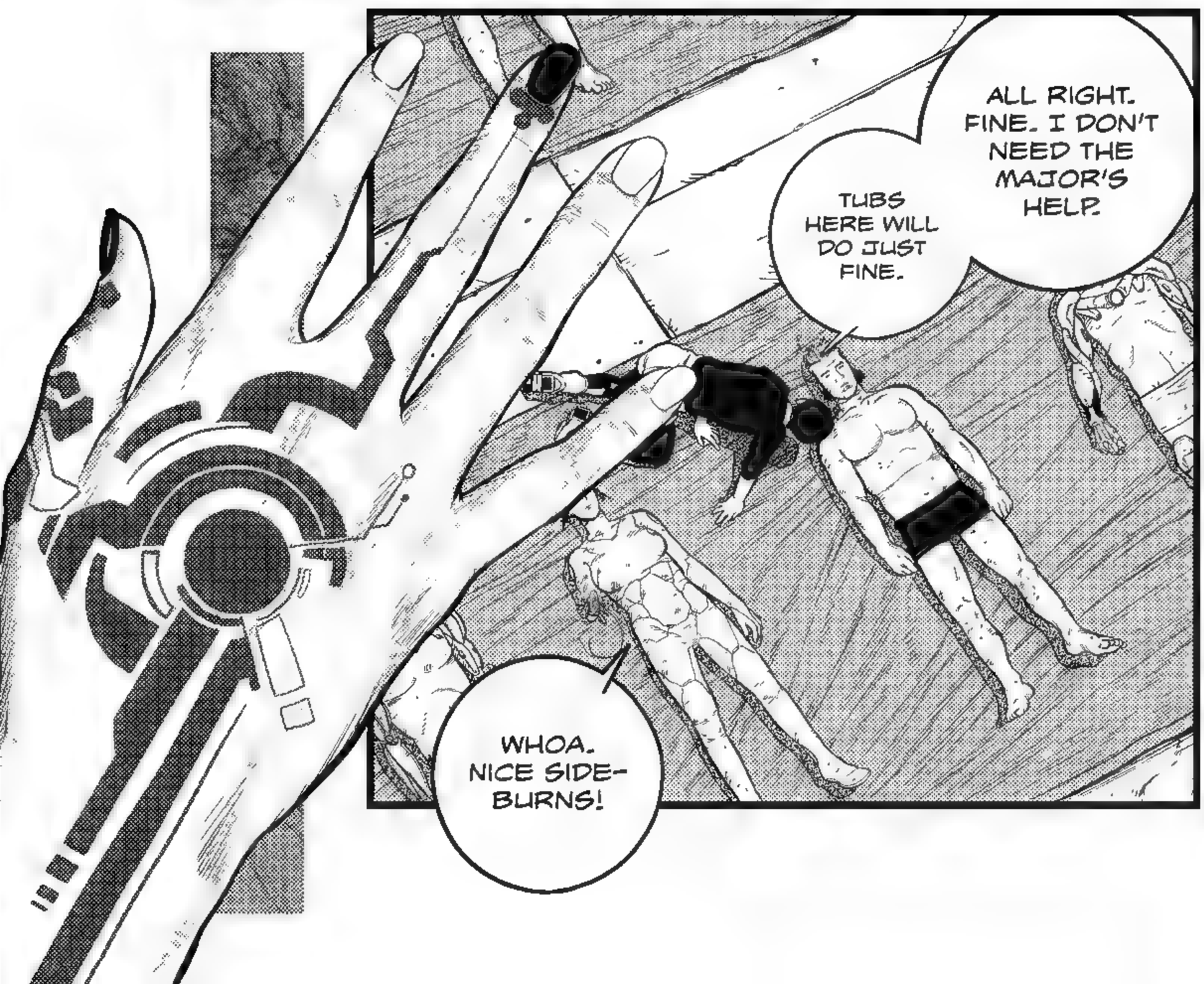
VESTIGE OF GHOST...

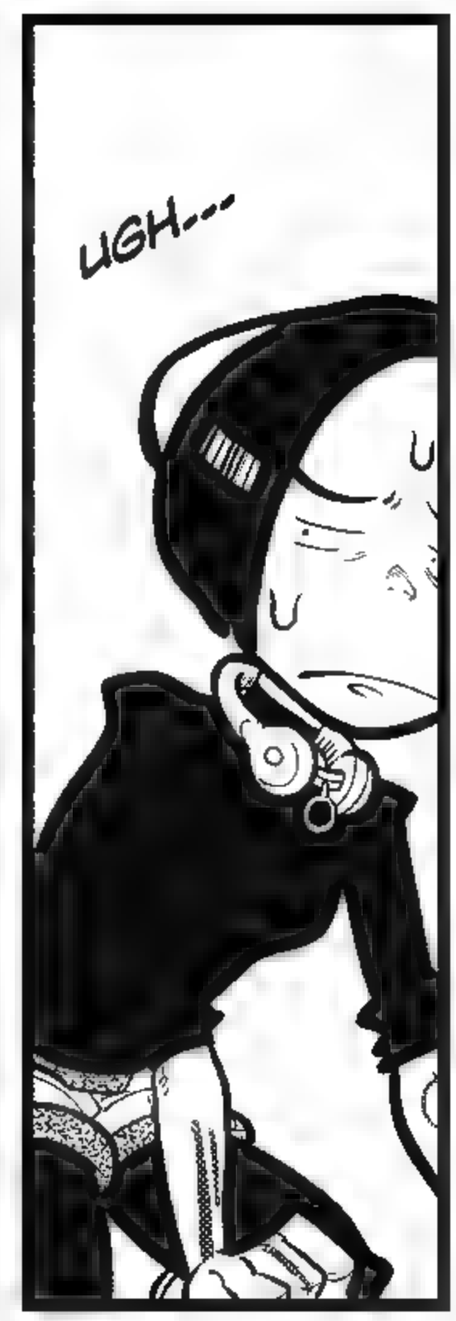
...DIVULGE THY TALE THAT TRUTH BE KNOWN.

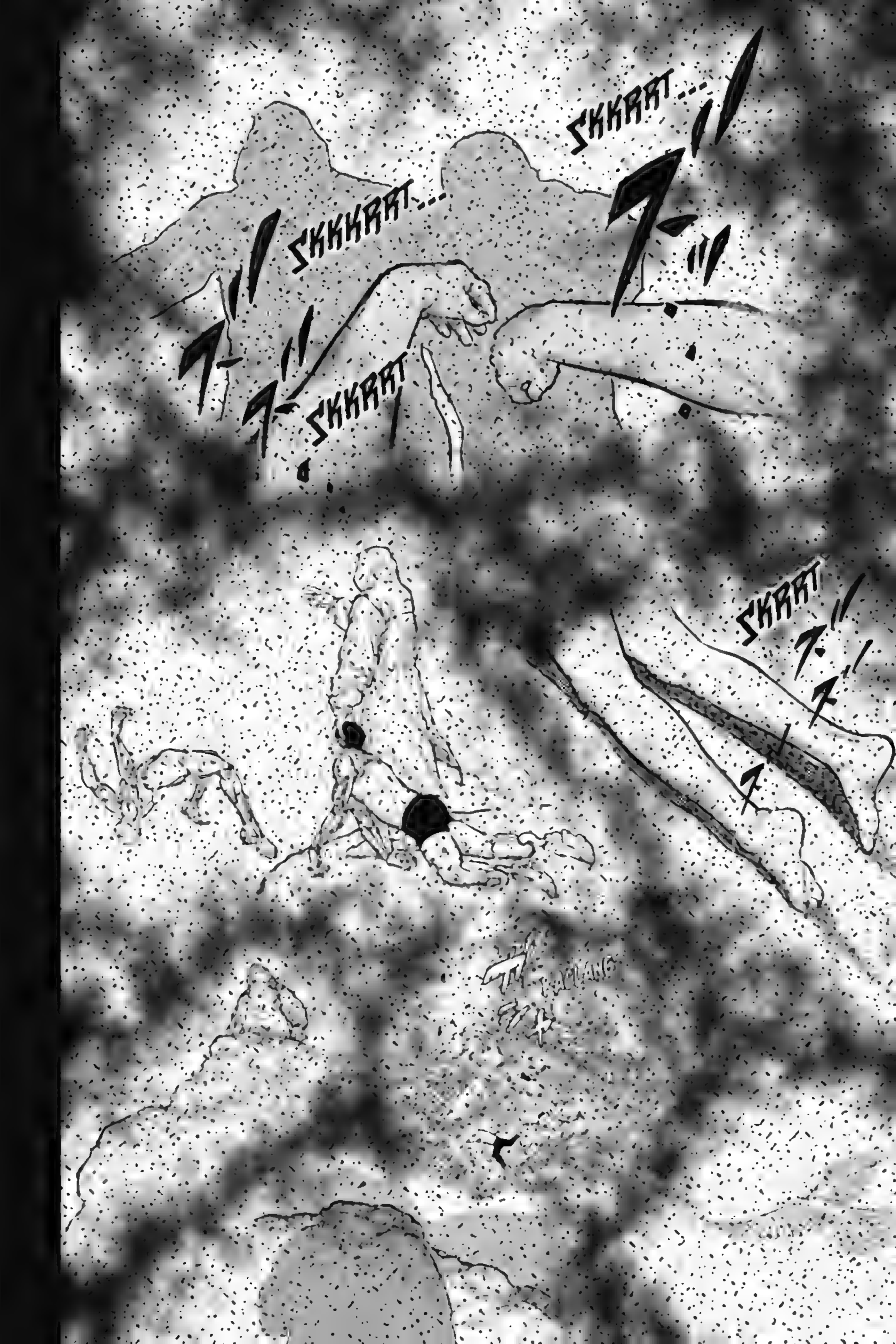
?!
LURCH




NOTHING. I DON'T FEEL A THING.
LIKE AN EMPTY LUNCHBOX.


ALL RIGHT. FINE. I DON'T NEED THE MAJOR'S HELP.
TUBS HERE WILL DO JUST FINE.
WHOA. NICE SIDE-BURNS!


UGH...


SKKKRRT...
SKKKRRT...
SKRRT
SKRRT
SKRRT

SO MUCH INTERFER-ENCE.

HFF...

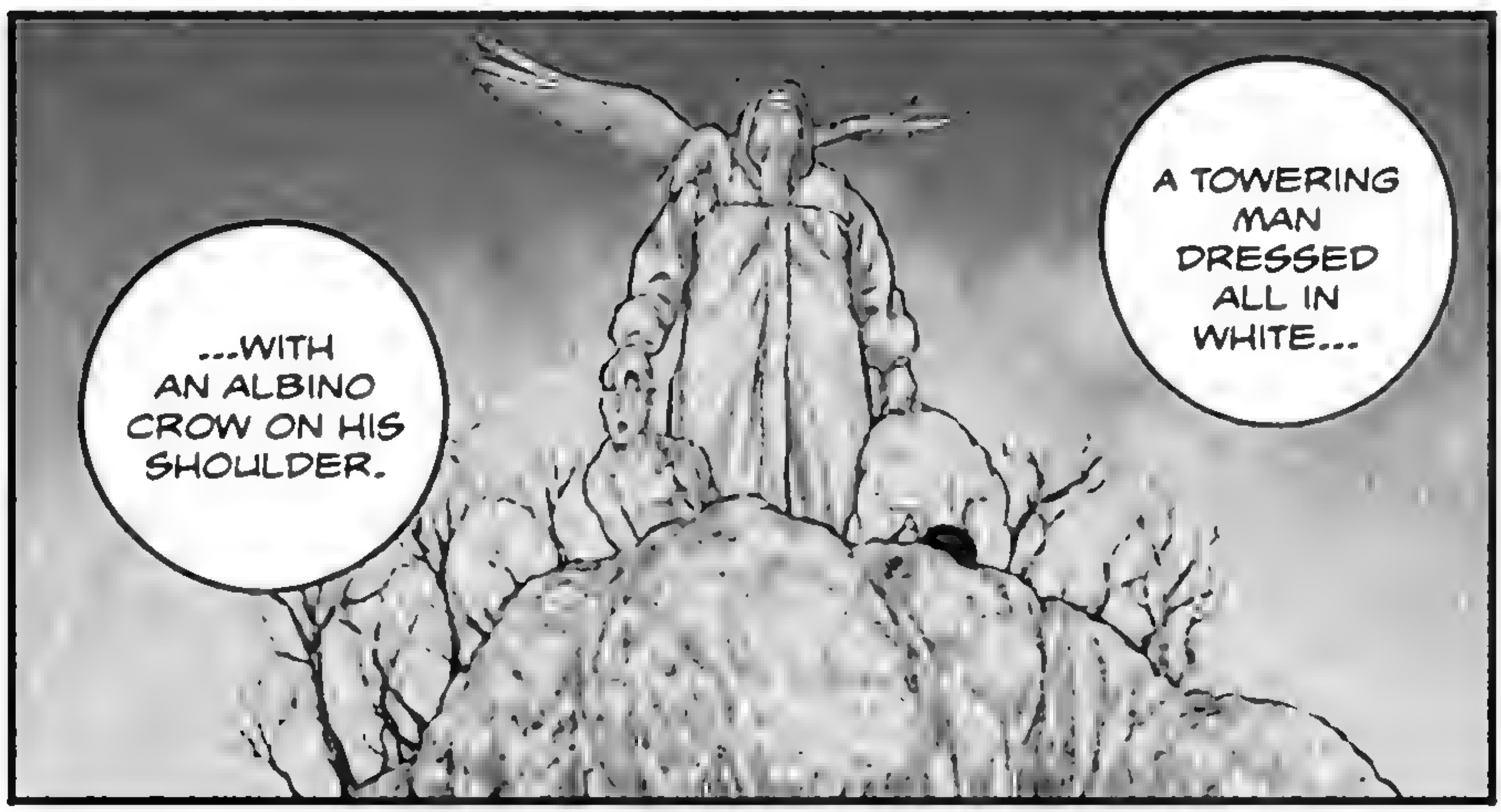
HFF...

MAYBE IT'S MY PERIOD...

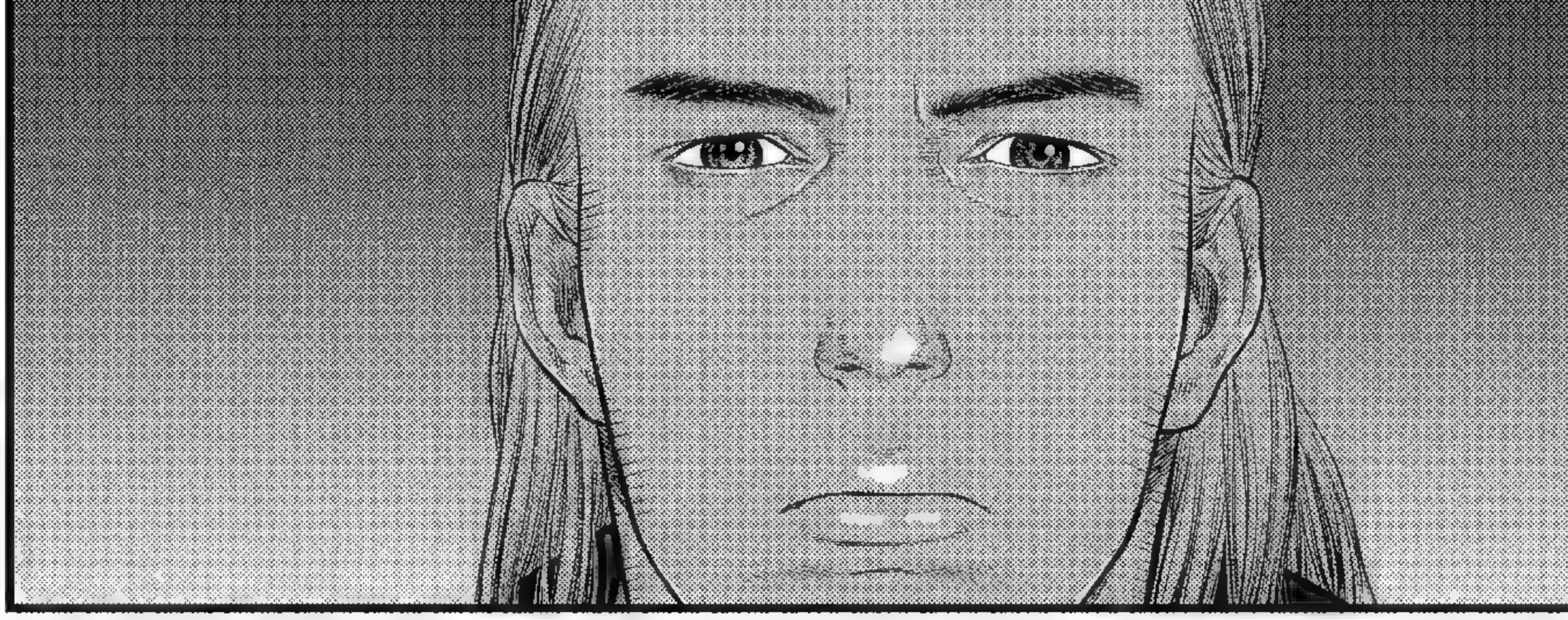
WHAT IN THE...

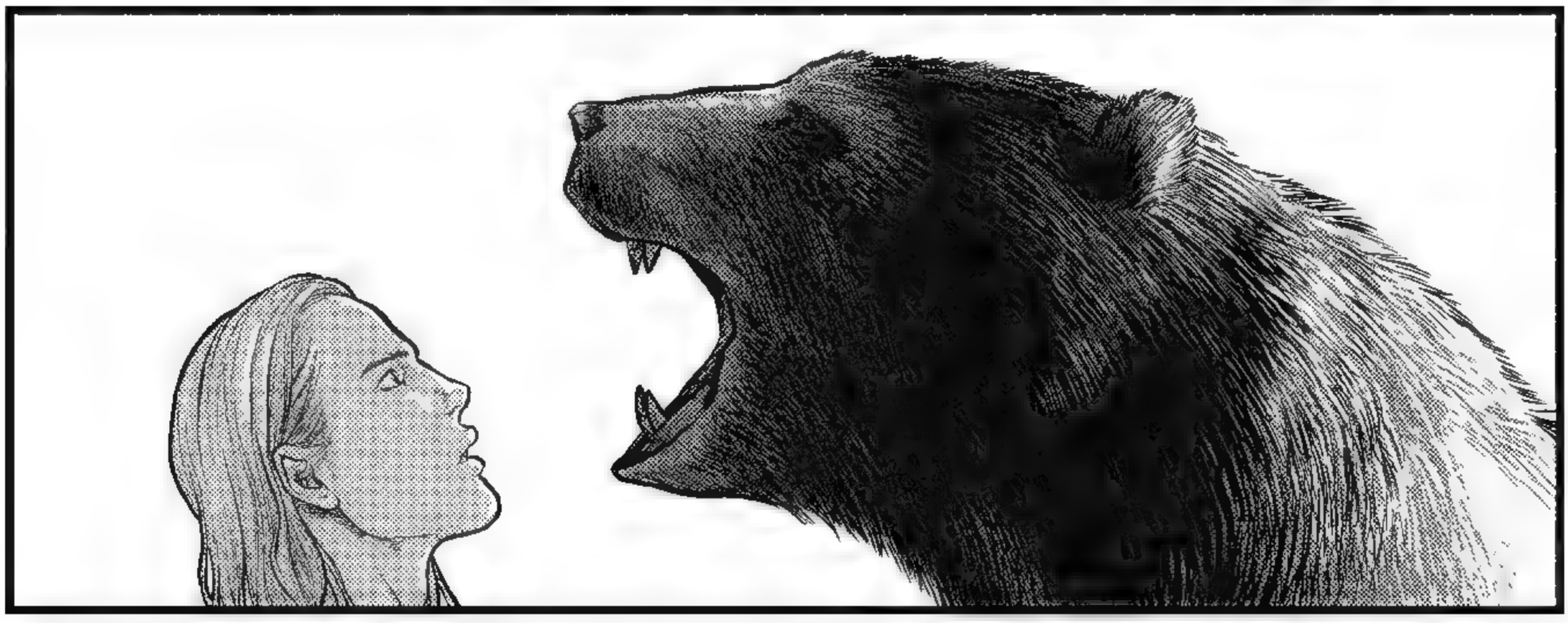
...WEREN'T CARRIED BY A TRUCK AT ALL.

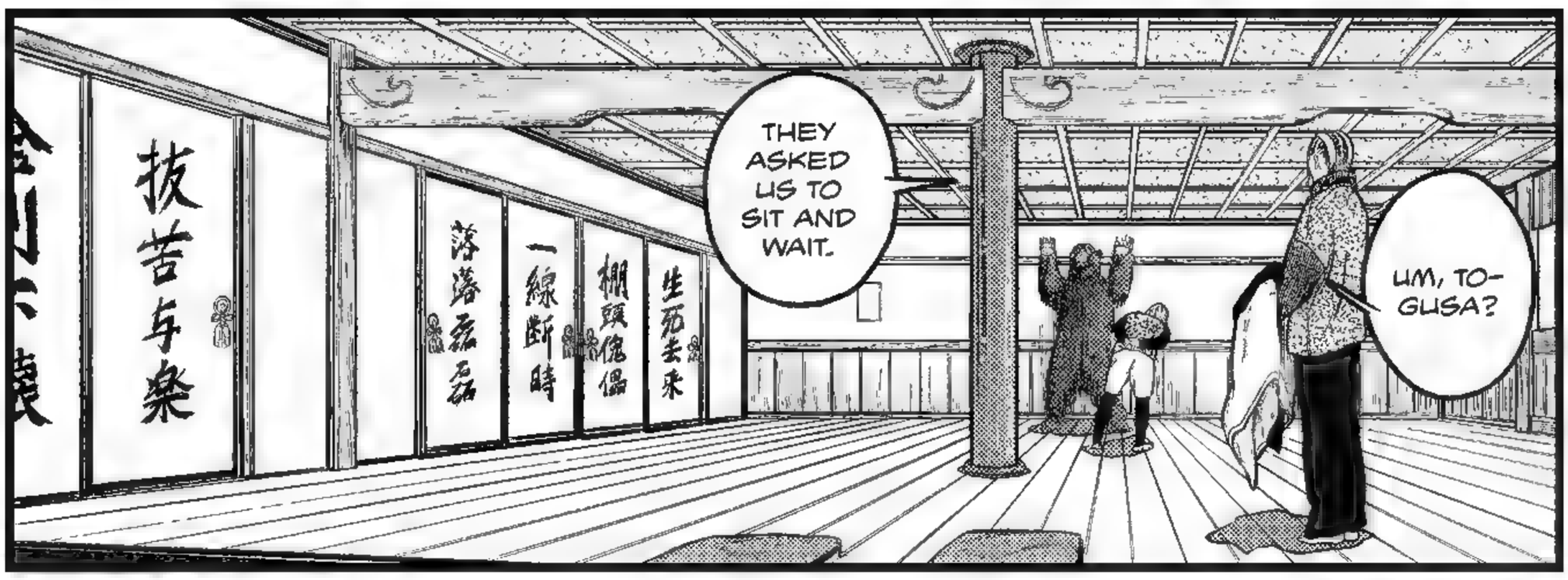
LOOKS LIKE THE PROSTHETICS DUMPED HERE...

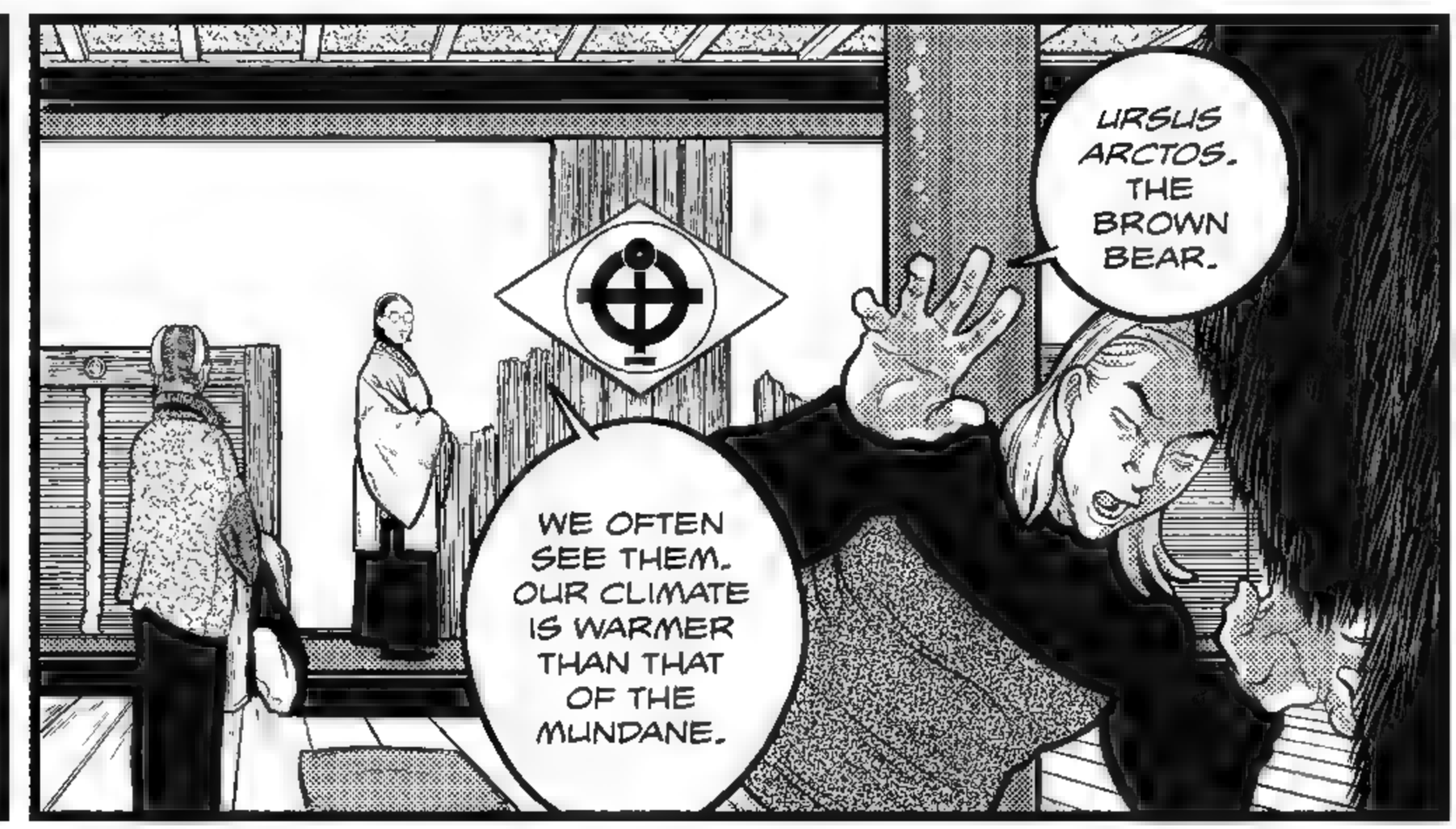


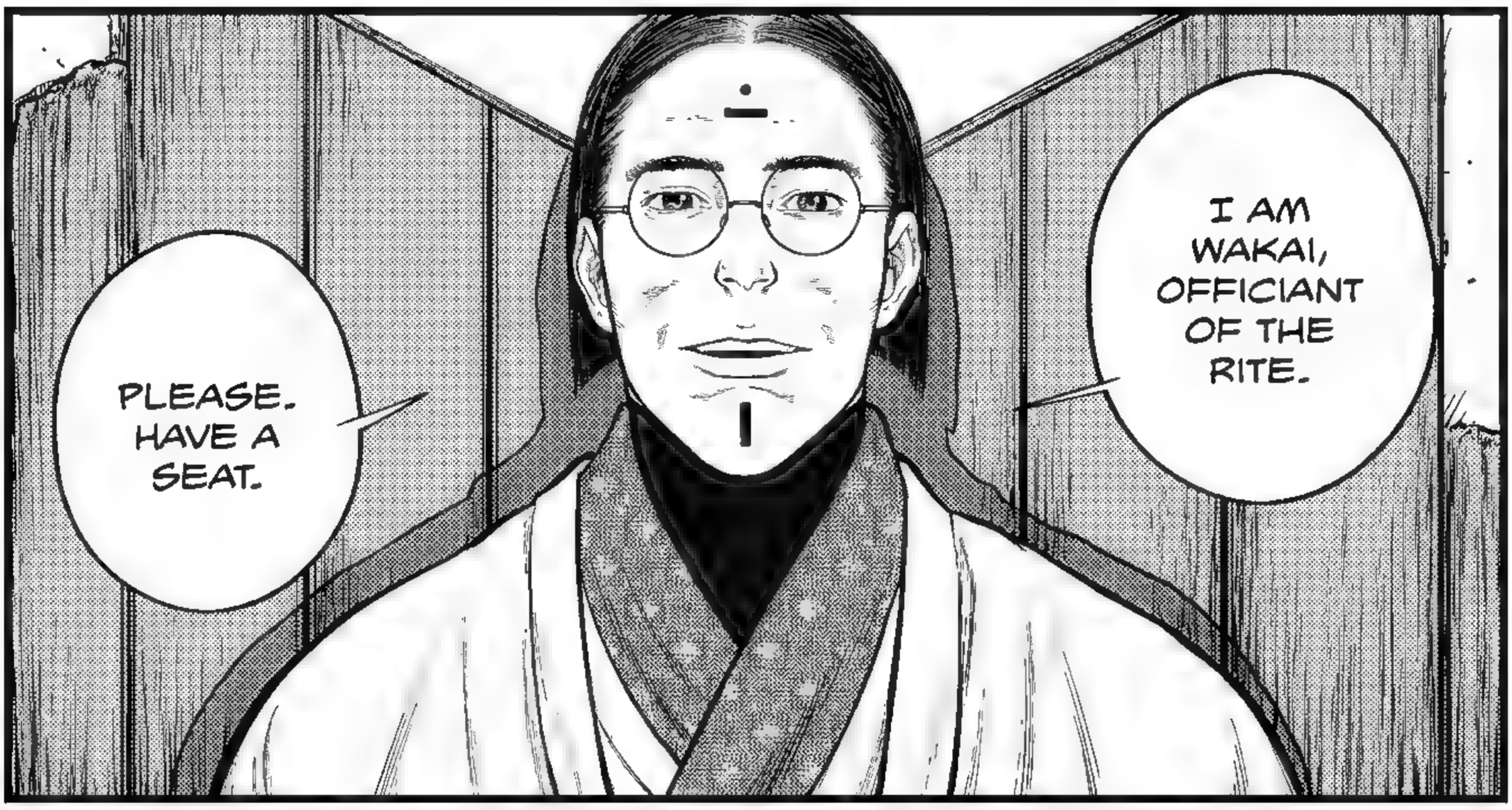
THAT EXPLAINS THE SCRAPES ON THEIR KNEES.
...AND THROWN 'EM OFF TO LAND HERE IN THE DUMP SITE.
HE WOULD'VE DRAGGED 'EM UP THE OTHER SIDE OF THAT CLIFF...
AND THE GUY IN WHITE... HE WAS MASSIVE. WHO IS HE?
BUT WHAT I DON'T GET...
...IS WHY THROW THEM?
HMM...
ALMOST LIKE RUN-NING INTO A REAL, LIVE BEAR.

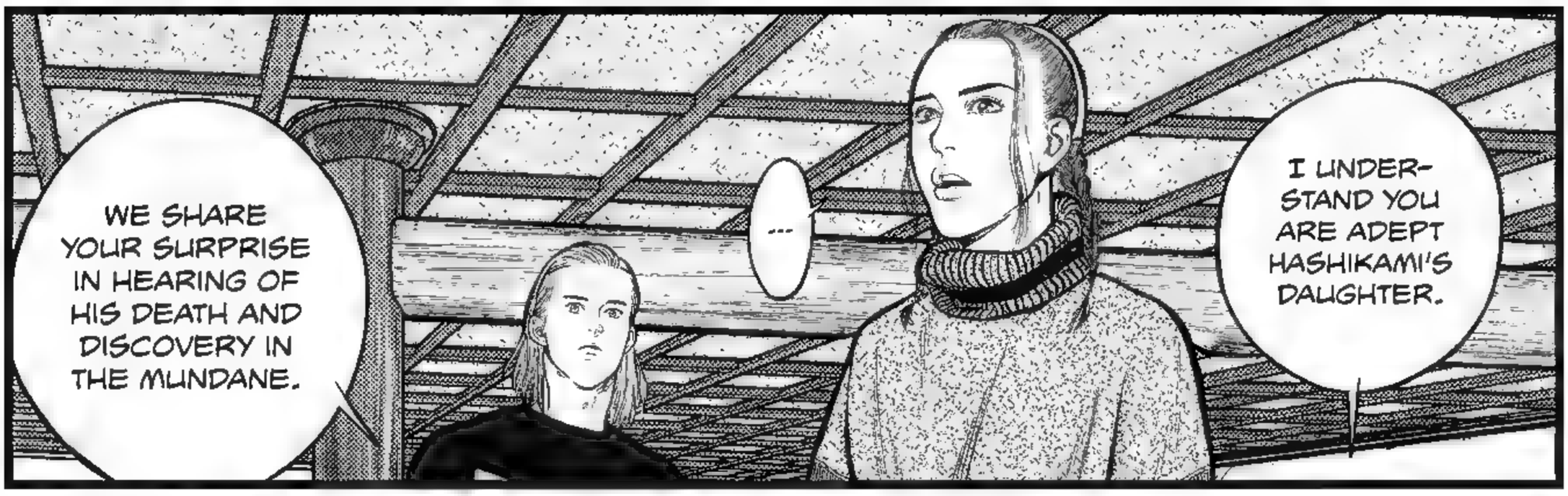


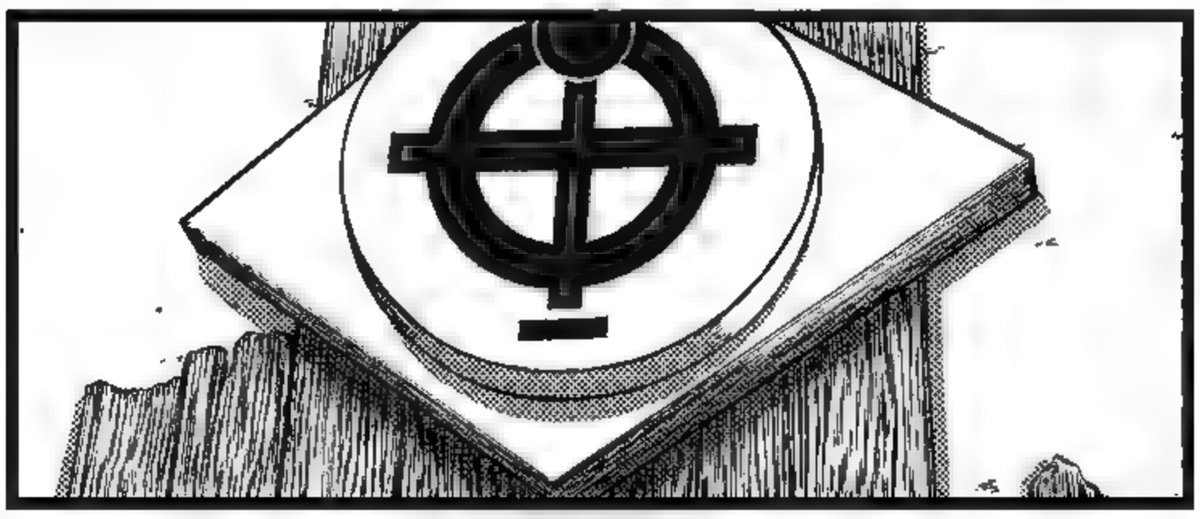


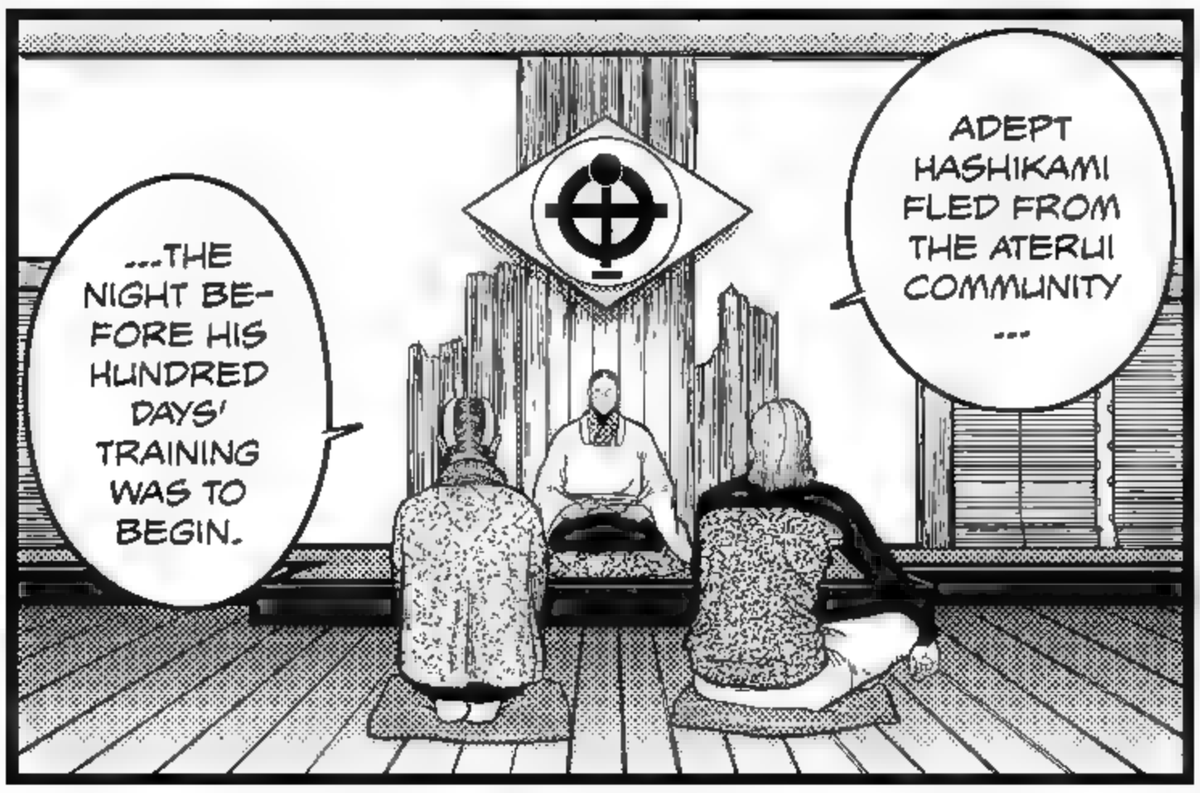

THEY ASKED US TO SIT AND WAIT.
UM, TOGUSA?


URSUS ARCTOS. THE BROWN BEAR.
WE OFTEN SEE THEM. OUR CLIMATE IS WARMER THAN THAT OF THE MUNDANE.


PLEASE. HAVE A SEAT.
I AM WAKAI, OFFICIANT OF THE RITE.


WE SHARE YOUR SURPRISE IN HEARING OF HIS DEATH AND DISCOVERY IN THE MUNDANE.
...
I UNDER-STAND YOU ARE ADEPT HASHIKAMI'S DAUGHTER.




...THE NIGHT BE-FORE HIS HUNDRED DAYS' TRAINING WAS TO BEGIN.
ADEPT HASHIKAMI FLED FROM THE ATERUI COMMUNITY ...

ALLOW ME TO RECOUNT THE DETAILS OF YOUR FATHER TO THE EXTENT I AM AWARE.

DID YOU FILE A REPORT WITH THE POLICE?

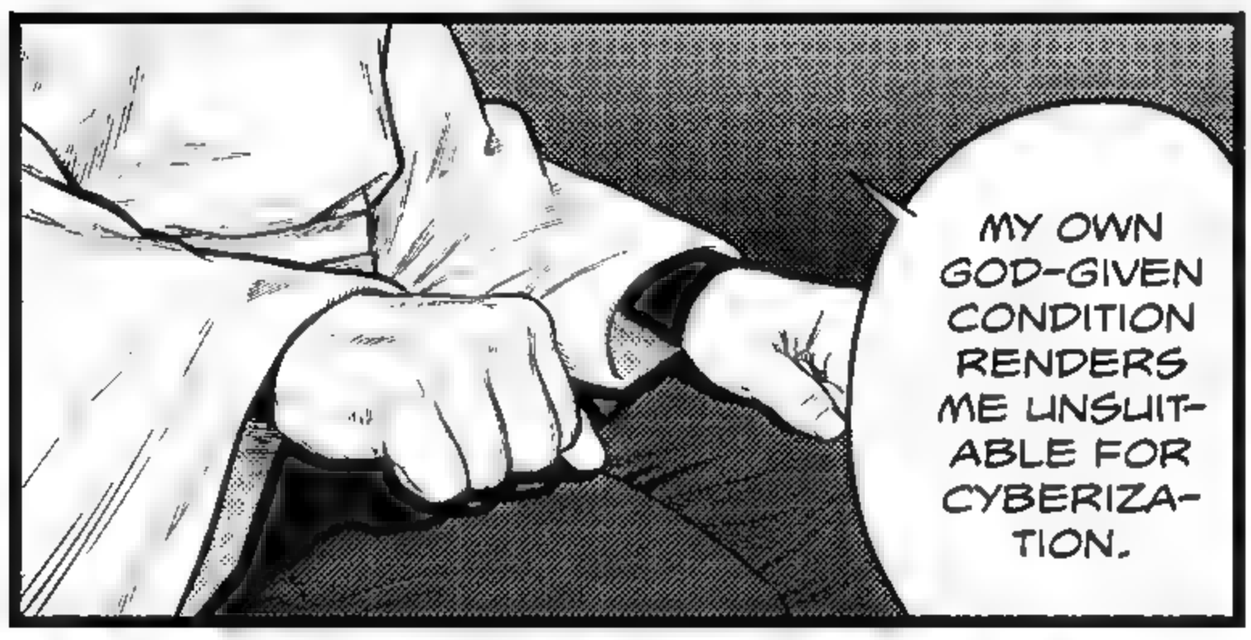
I MUST ADMIT WE FOUND IT PUZZLING.
AND HIS OWN THIRST FOR THE TRUTH WAS GREAT. HIS DIS-APPEARANCE, THEREFORE, WAS QUITE UNEXPEC-TED.
HE WAS THOUGHT OF HIGHLY AMONG THE OTHER DIS-CIPLES.

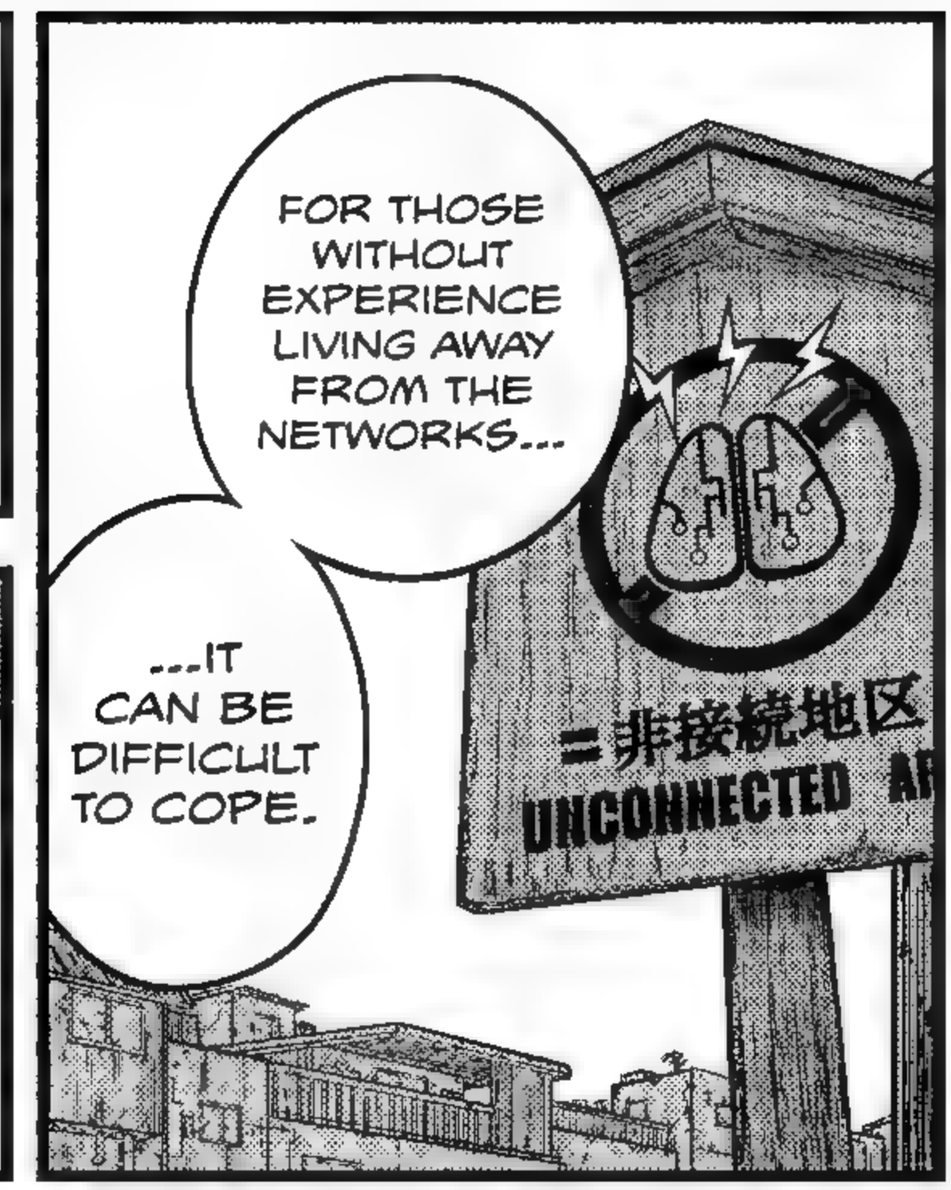
THAT'S HOW IT IS HERE, HUH?
WELCOME WITH OPEN ARMS AND SEND OFF WITH WAVING HANDS.
RIGHT ...
ALL MAY COME AND GO AS THEY PLEASE. IT IS NOT OUR WAY TO INTERFERE.
OUR VILLAGE IS A PLACE OF LEARNING.

ARE THERE MANY OTHERS WHO LEAVE LIKE THAT?

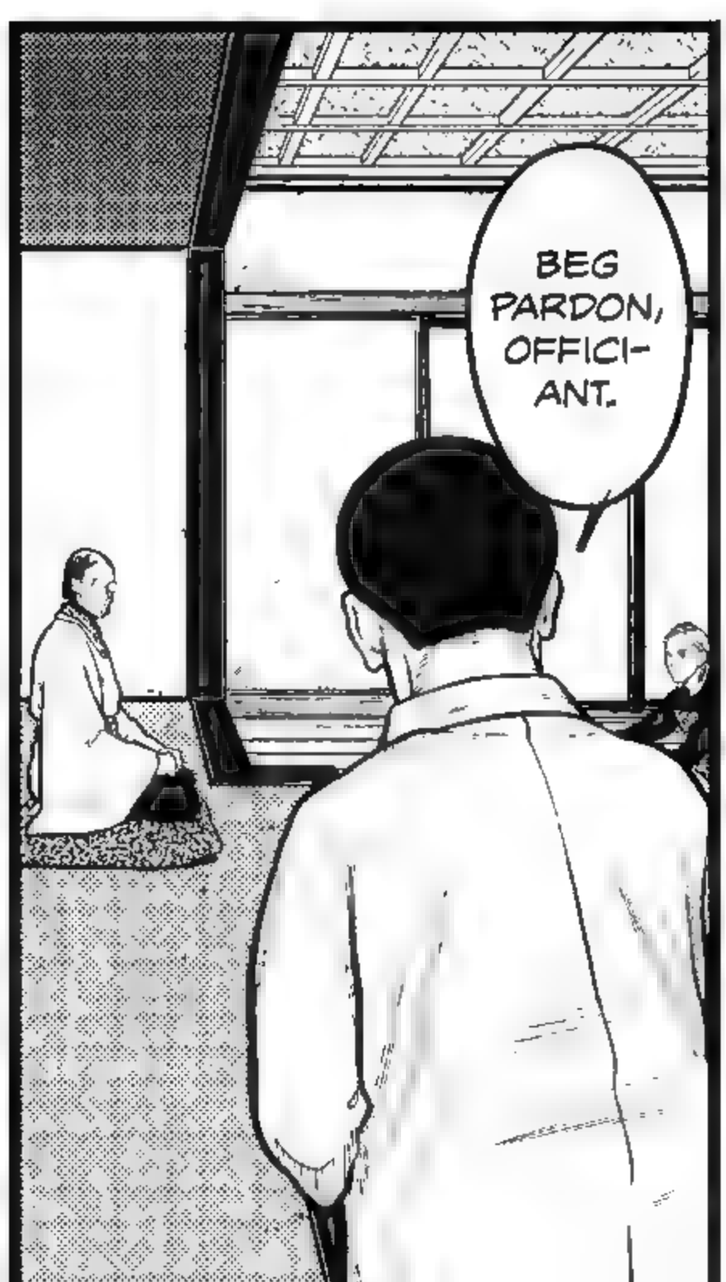
THAT IS CORRECT.
AND THAT, I REGRET TO SAY, IS ALL I KNOW OF ADEPT HASHIKAMI.

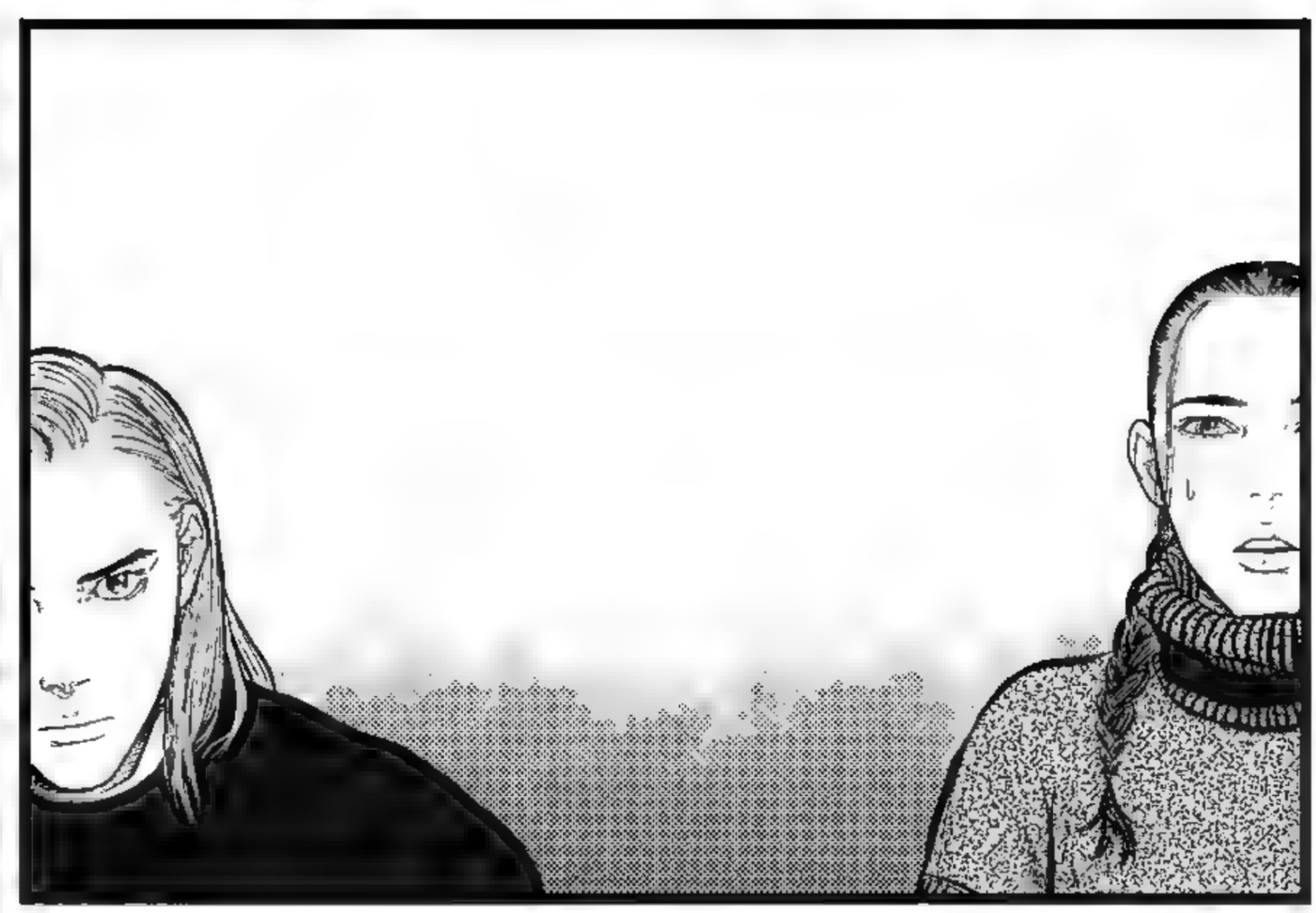
WHAT ABOUT YOU? DO YOU NOT FIND IT HARD?


MY OWN GOD-GIVEN CONDITION RENDERS ME UNSUITABLE FOR CYBERIZATION.

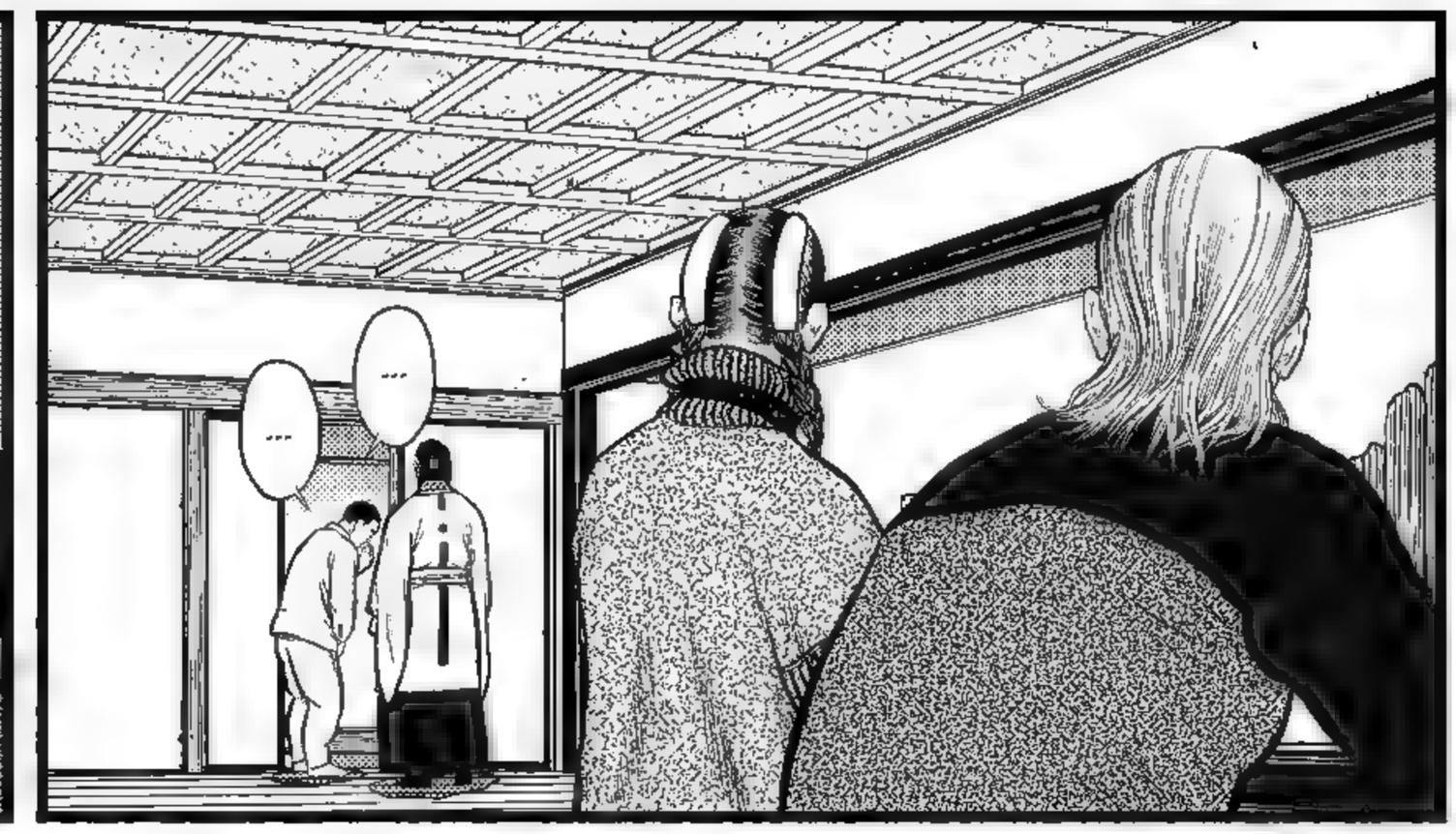

FOR THOSE WITHOUT EXPERIENCE LIVING AWAY FROM THE NETWORKS...
...IT CAN BE DIFFICULT TO COPE.
=非接続地区
UNCONNECTED

...THAT I WAS LED HERE BY FATE.
IT IS MY BELIEF...

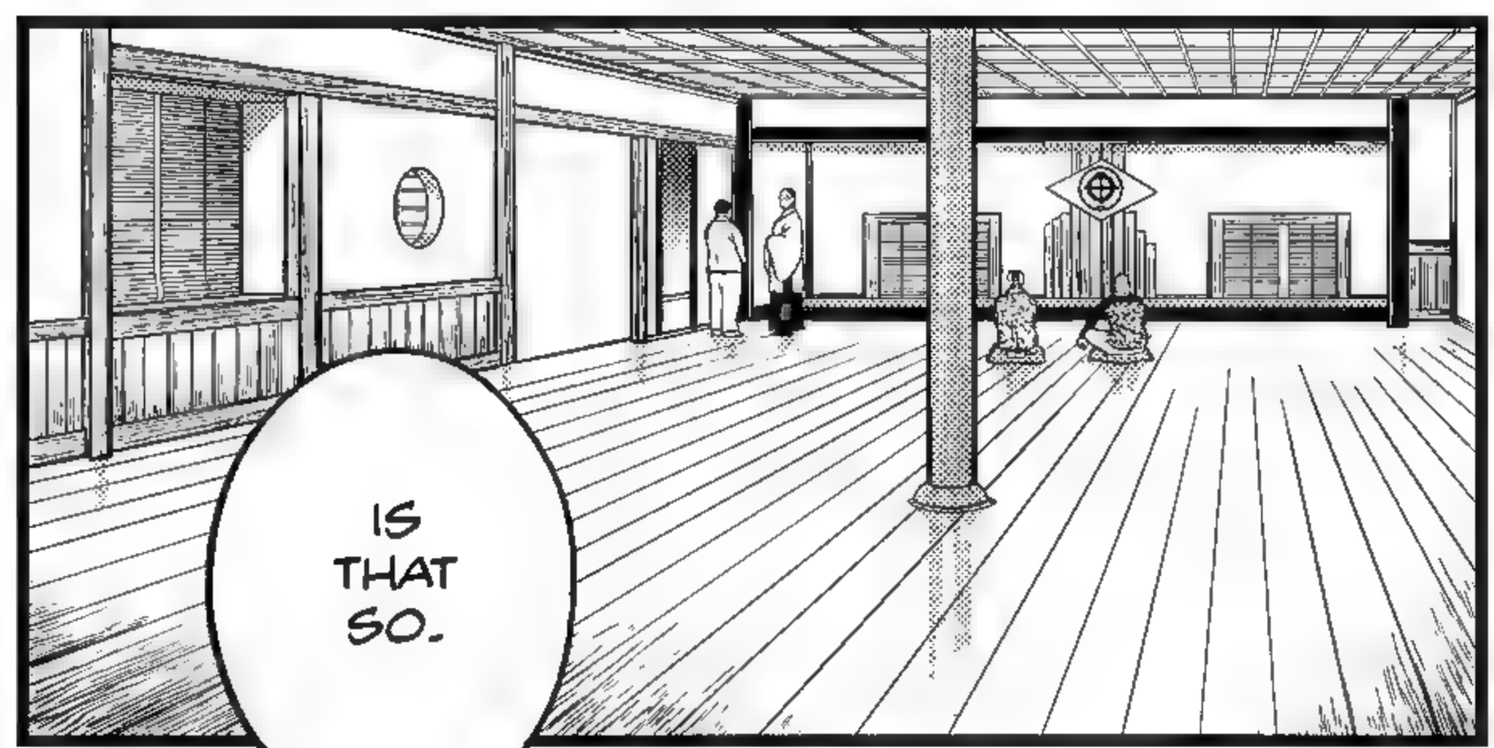

BEG PARDON, OFFICIANT.

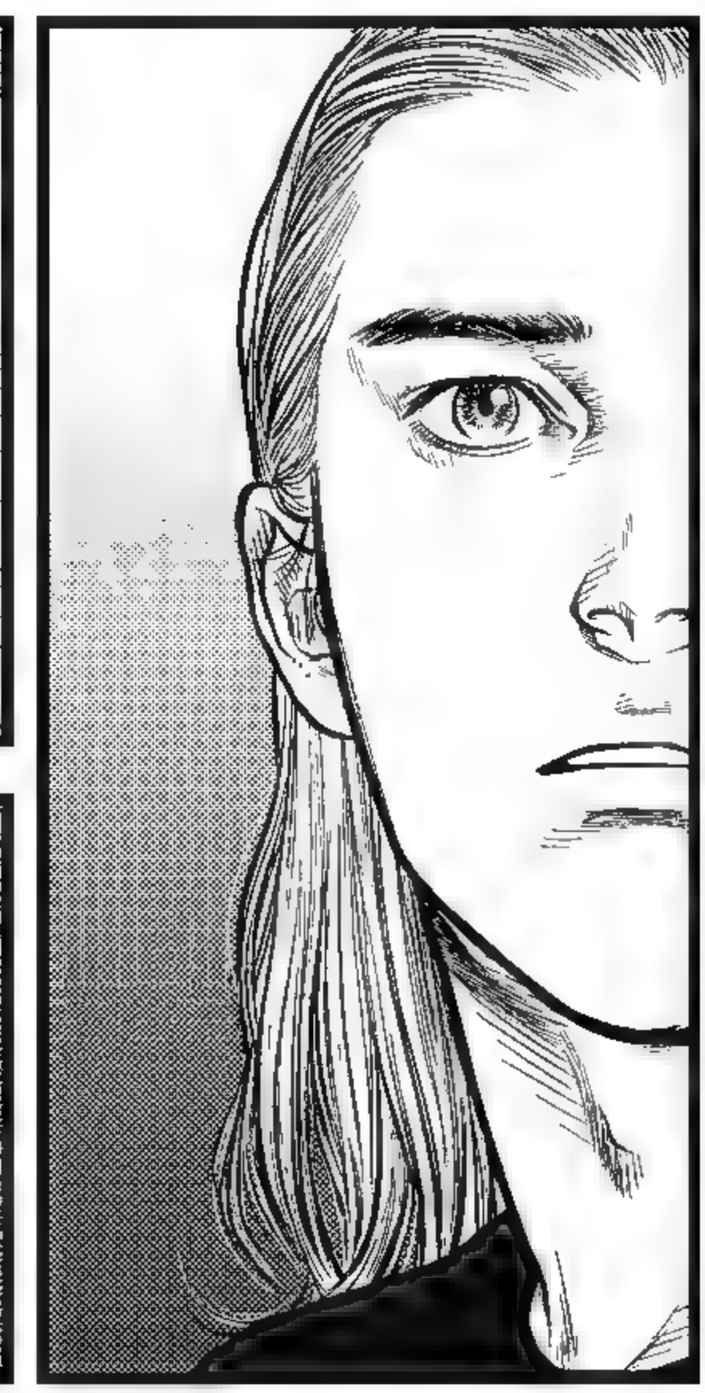


MISTER TOGUSA...

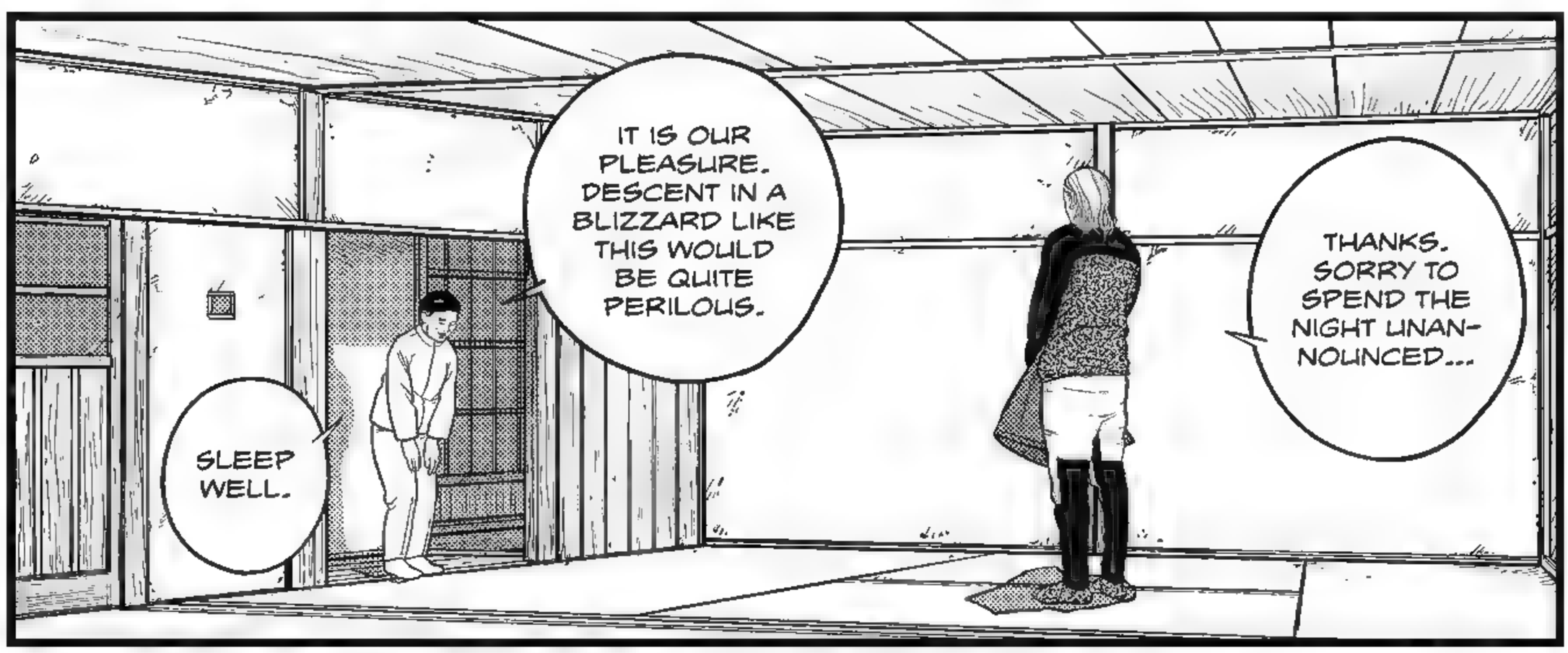

...
...

...OF ANY MOTOKO KUSANAGI HAVING COME TO OUR VILLAGE.
IT WOULD SEEM WE HAVE NO RECORD...


IS THAT SO.

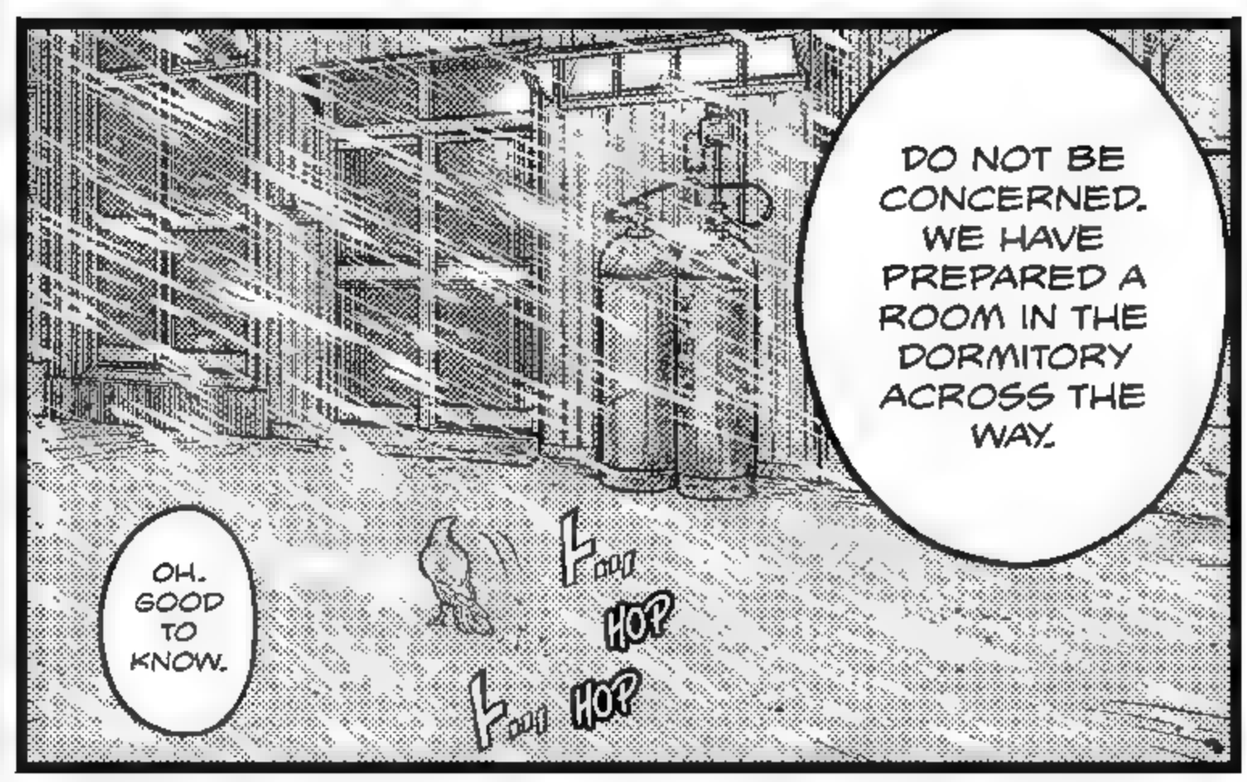


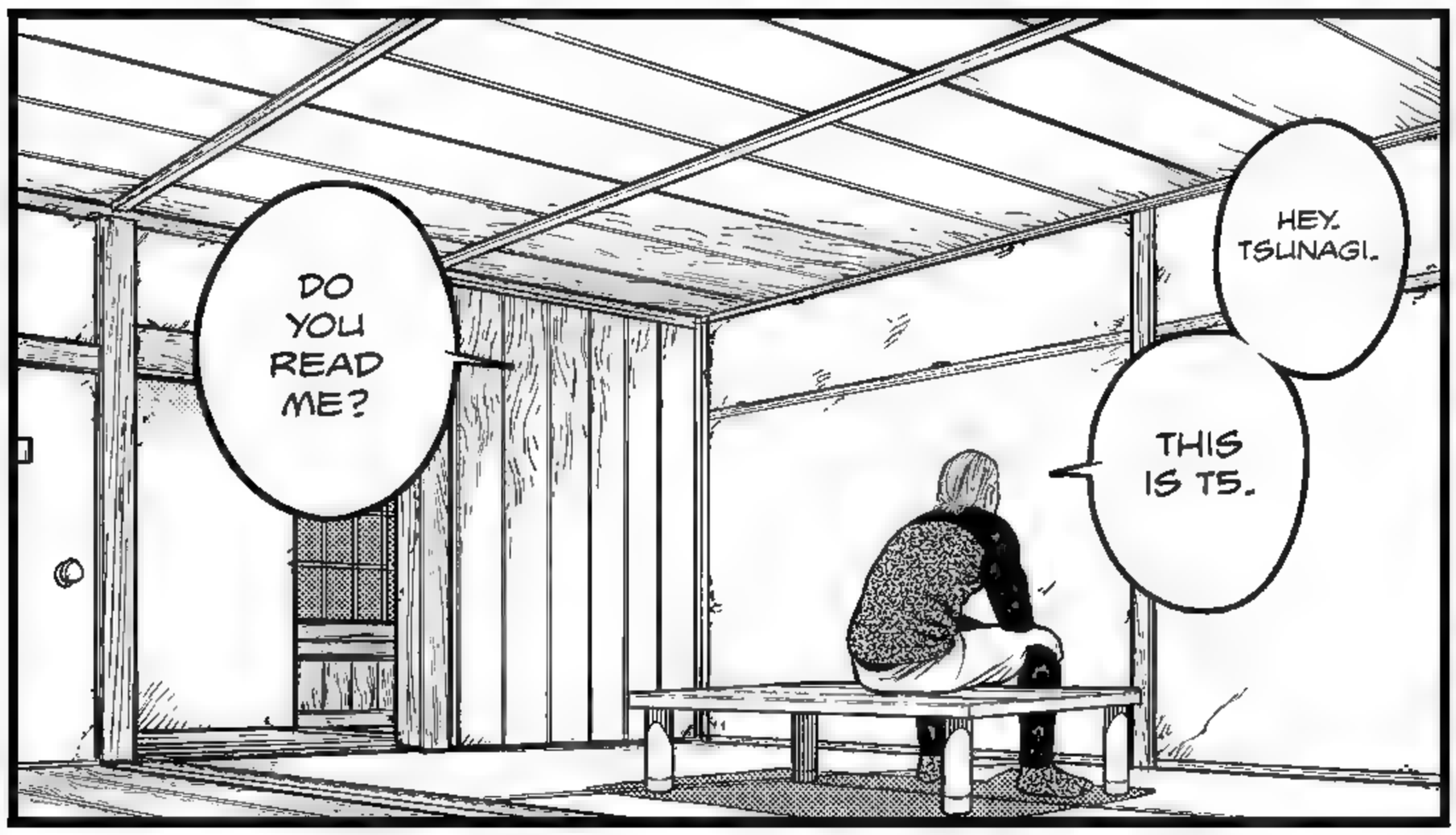
RATTLE
HA
INN
PLEASE LET US KNOW IF THERE IS ANYTHING YOU REQUIRE.
HA
RATTLE


IT IS OUR PLEASURE. DESCENT IN A BLIZZARD LIKE THIS WOULD BE QUITE PERILOUS.
THANKS. SORRY TO SPEND THE NIGHT UNANNOUNCED...
SLEEP WELL.

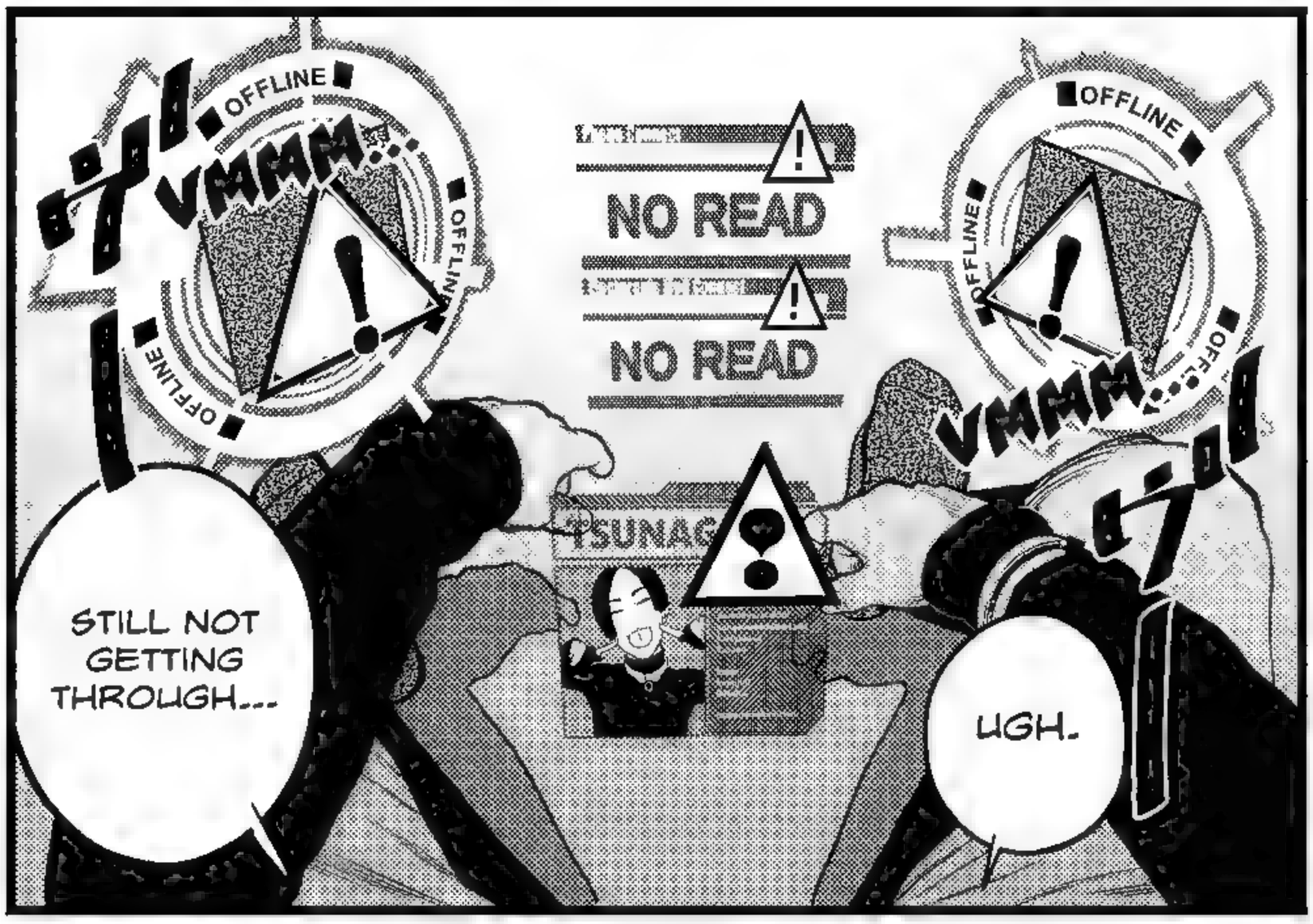
I SHALL LEAVE YOU TO REST. GOOD NIGHT.
HA
RATTLE
RATTLE
HA

WHAT ABOUT MARI?
OH, UM...

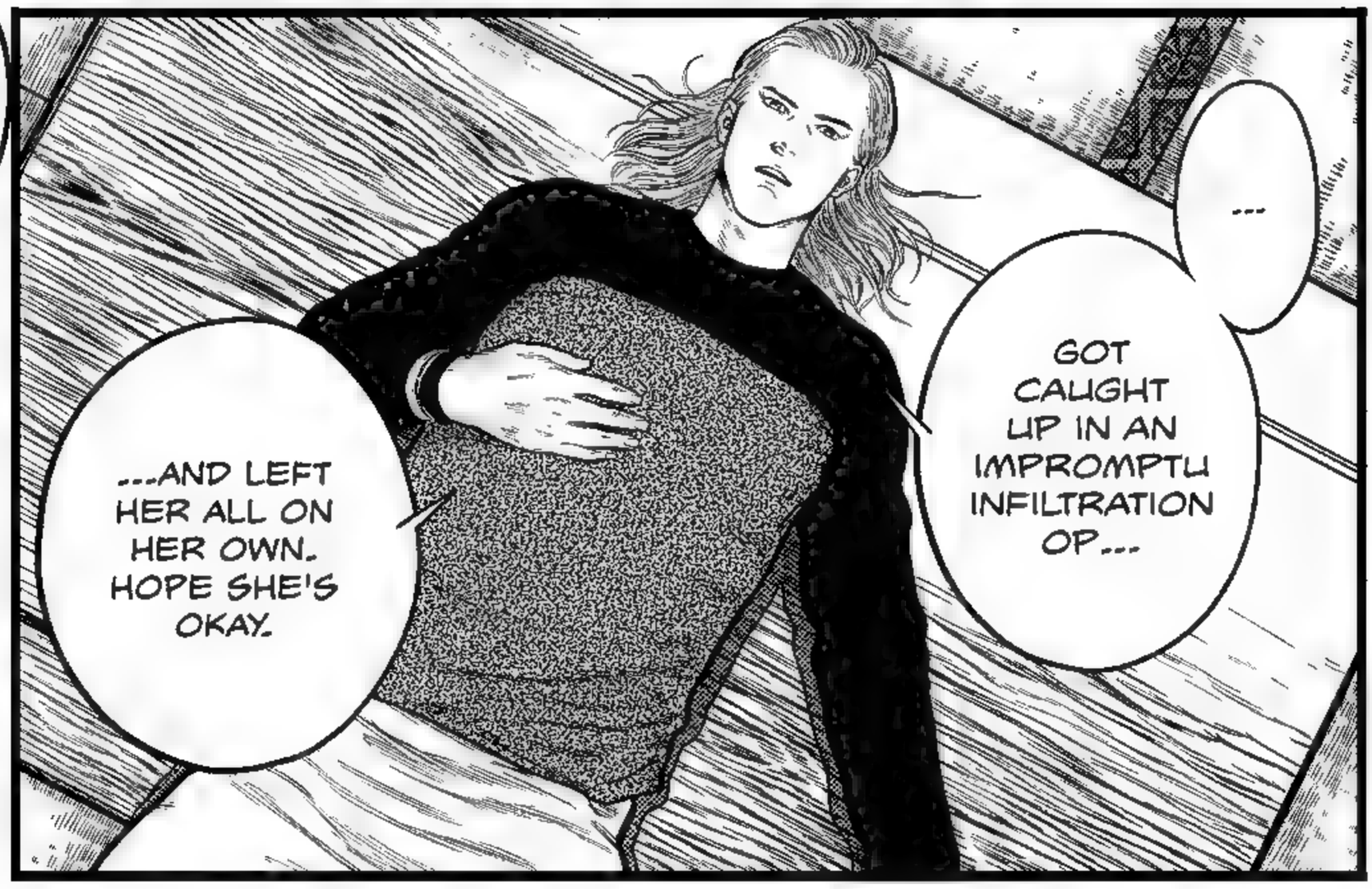

DO NOT BE CONCERNED. WE HAVE PREPARED A ROOM IN THE DORMITORY ACROSS THE WAY.
OH. GOOD TO KNOW.
HOP
HOP

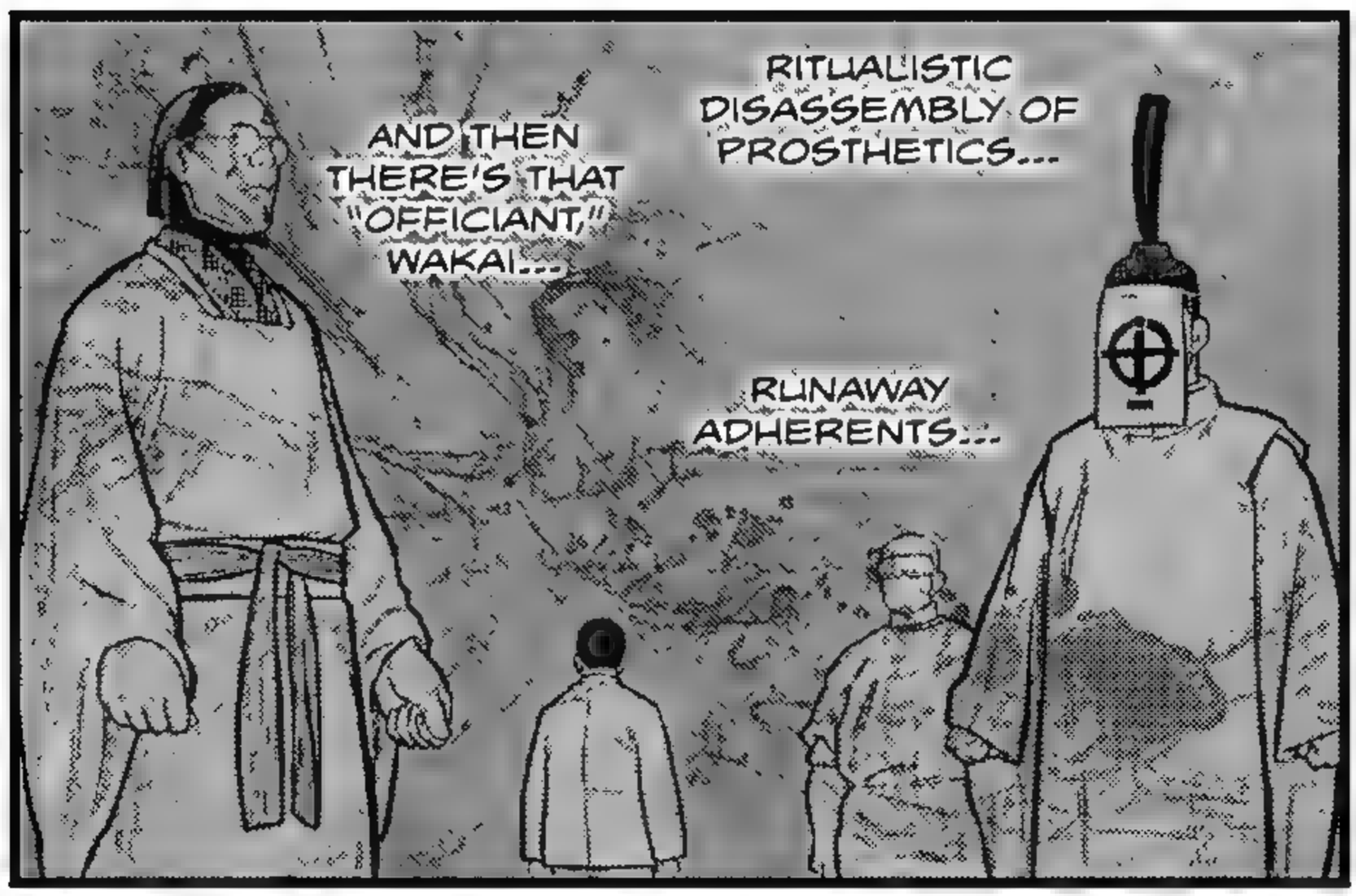

DO YOU READ ME?
HEY. TSUNAGI.
THIS IS TS.

...NO MATTER HOW MANY TIMES I TRY.
FLOMP

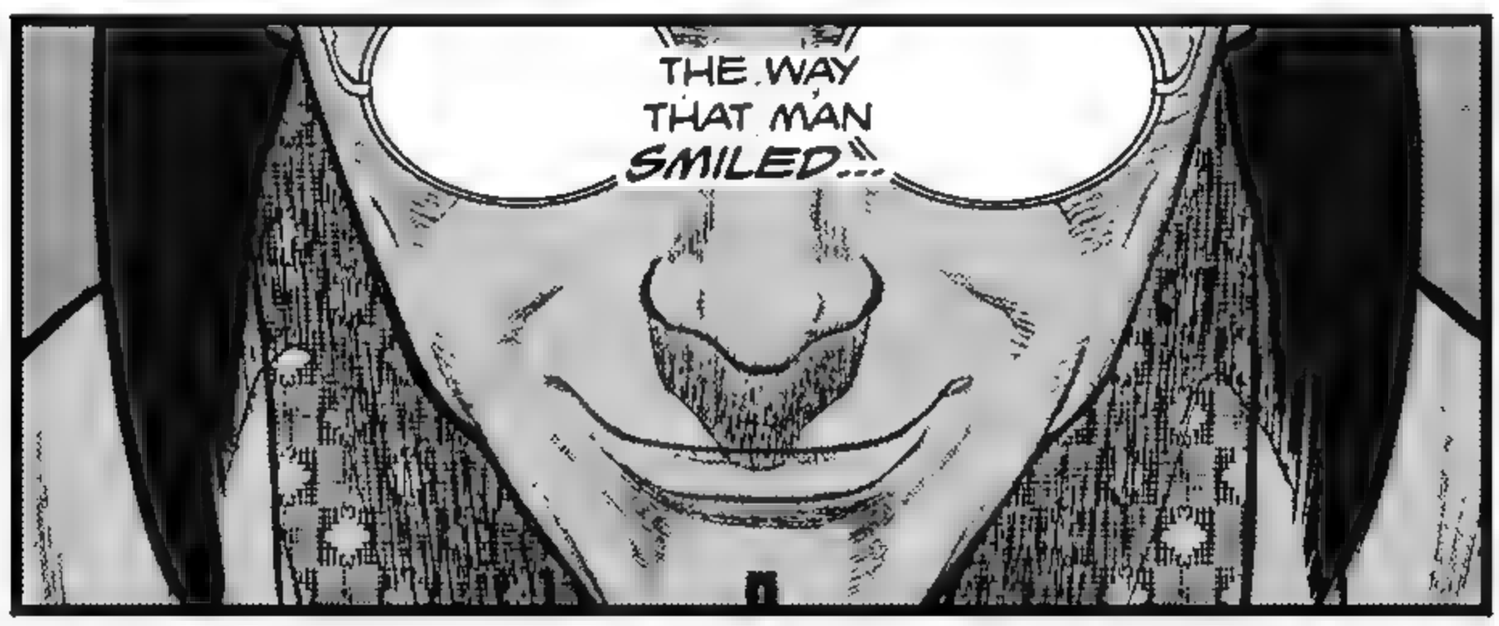

OFFLINE
VMMM...
NO READ
NO READ
TSUNAG
STILL NOT GETTING THROUGH...
UGH.

AH, I BET SHE'S ALL LIKE...
I JUST HAD TO TRY THE LOCAL CUISINE!
...AND OFF HAVING FUN.


...
GOT CAUGHT UP IN AN IMPROMPTU INFILTRATION OP...
...AND LEFT HER ALL ON HER OWN. HOPE SHE'S OKAY.

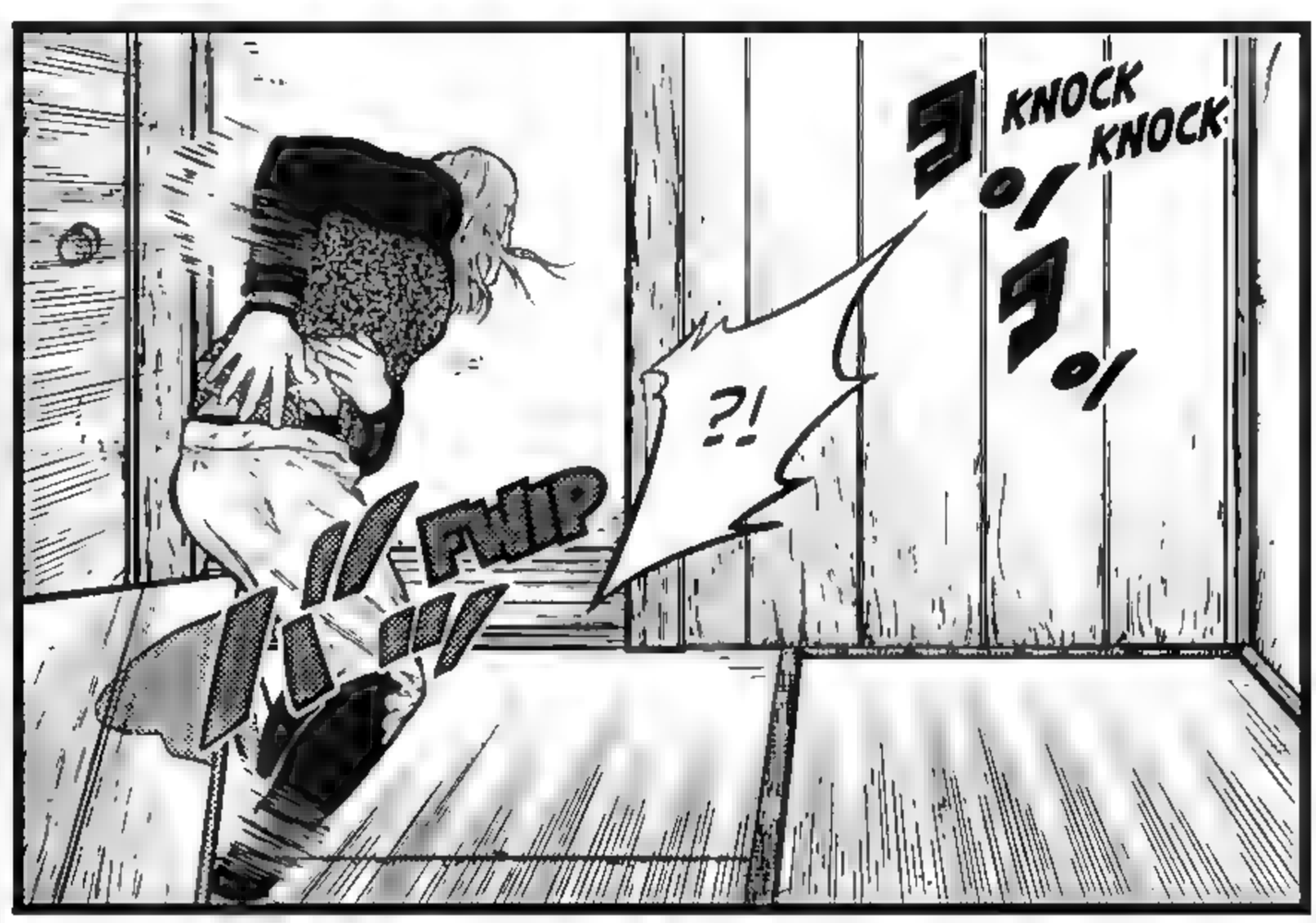

AND THEN THERE'S THAT "OFFICIANT," WAKAI...
RITUALISTIC DISASSEMBLY OF PROSTHETICS...
RUNAWAY ADHERENTS...

STILL NOT QUITE SURE WHAT TO MAKE...
...OF THIS ATERUI BUSI-NESS.


THE WAY THAT MAN SMILED...

I JUST HOPE I MAKE IT SAFELY THROUGH THE NIGHT.

SNAP
YES? WHO IS IT?


KNOCK KNOCK
?!
FWIP

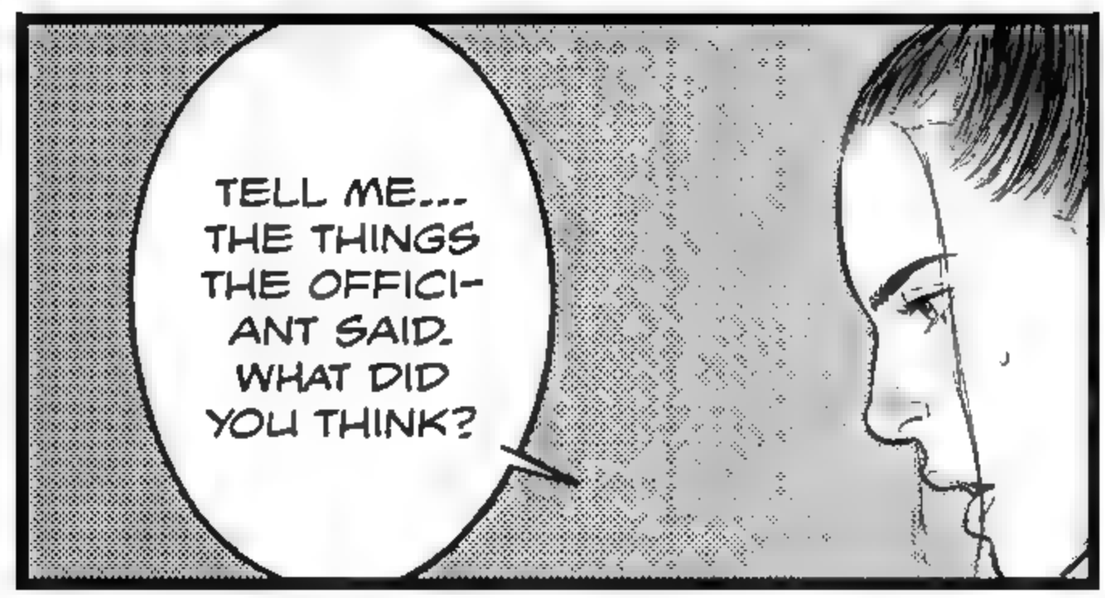
MARI HASHIKAMI.
!

IT'S ME. MARI.

OH. MARI.
PLEASE. COME IN.

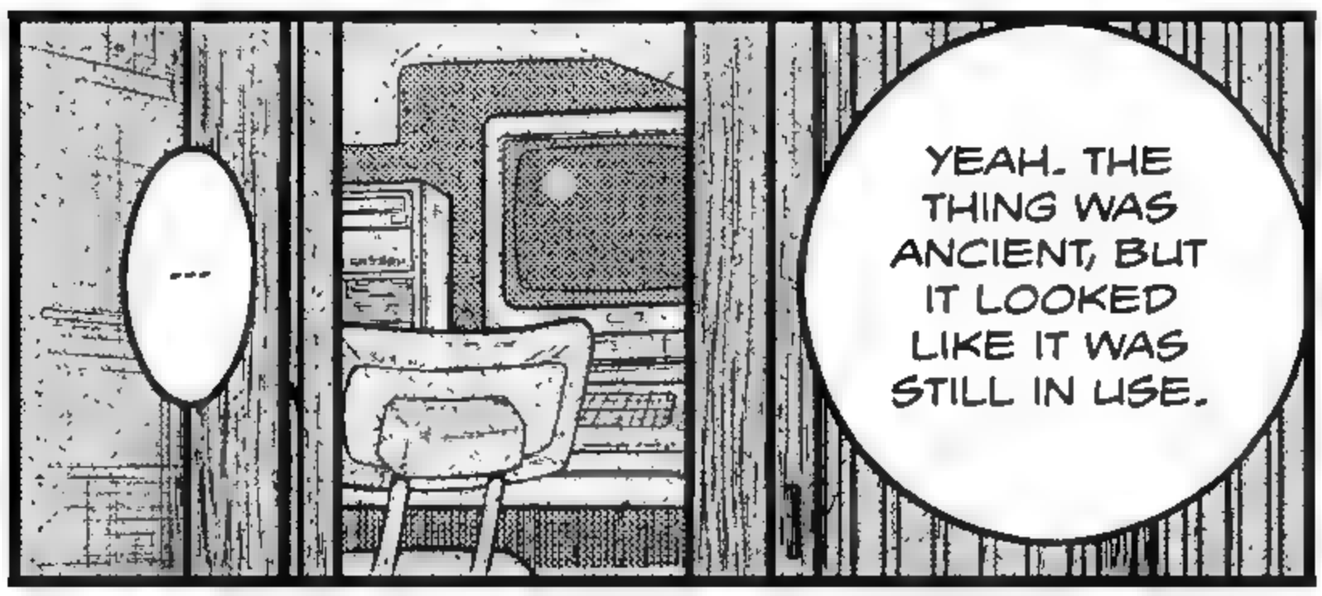
IS SOME-THING WRONG?
SORRY TO BOTHER YOU.

I'D SAY WE'VE HIT A DEAD END.
WELL, HE DOESN'T SEEM TO HAVE MANY DETAILS ON YOUR STEP-FATHER.
THAT'S JUST MY INSTINCT, THOUGH.
I SEE.
CLATTER


TELL ME... THE THINGS THE OFFICI-ANT SAID. WHAT DID YOU THINK?

WHAT DID I THINK?

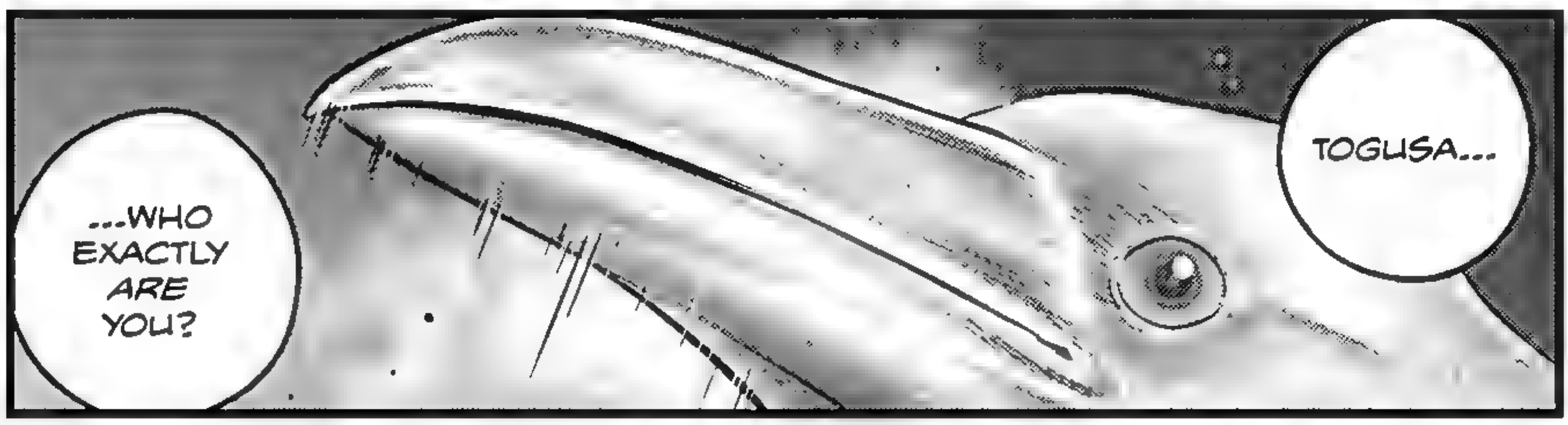
THE STORE-HOUSE WHERE WE SIGNED IN. THERE WAS A WIRED CON-SOLE IN THE BACK.
A NET-WORK CONNEC-TION?


...
YEAH. THE THING WAS ANCIENT, BUT IT LOOKED LIKE IT WAS STILL IN USE.

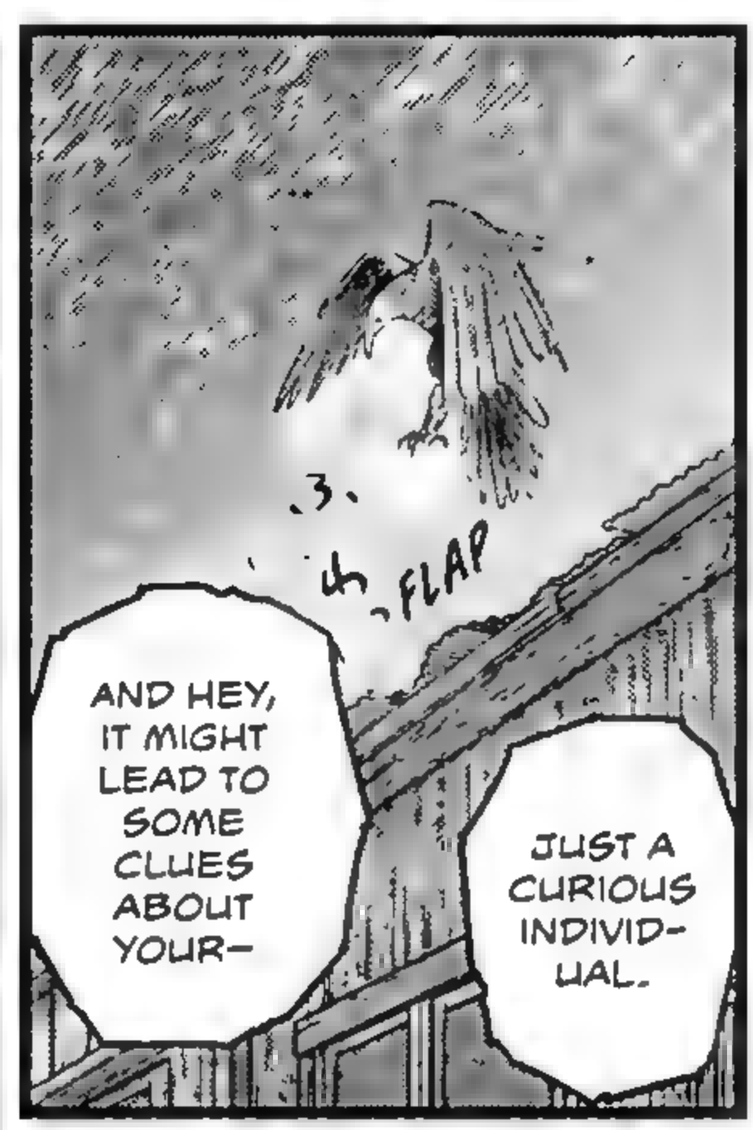
BUT TELL ME, DID YOU NOTICE ANYTHING STRANGE?
HUH?

YEAH. SOME-THING'S OFF ABOUT THIS PLACE.
THERE IS?!
THERE'S A SURVEIL-LANCE CAMERA IN THE EYE.
AND THE TAXIDERMY MOUNT...

...I'M THINKING I'D LIKE TO FIGURE OUT WHAT'S ON THAT CONSOLE.
ONCE IT GETS LATE, AND EVERYONE'S ASLEEP...


...WHO EXACTLY ARE YOU?
TOGUSA...

?
IS SOME-THING WR-
CLATTER


FLAP
AND HEY, IT MIGHT LEAD TO SOME CLUES ABOUT YOUR-
JUST A CURIOUS INDIVID-UAL.

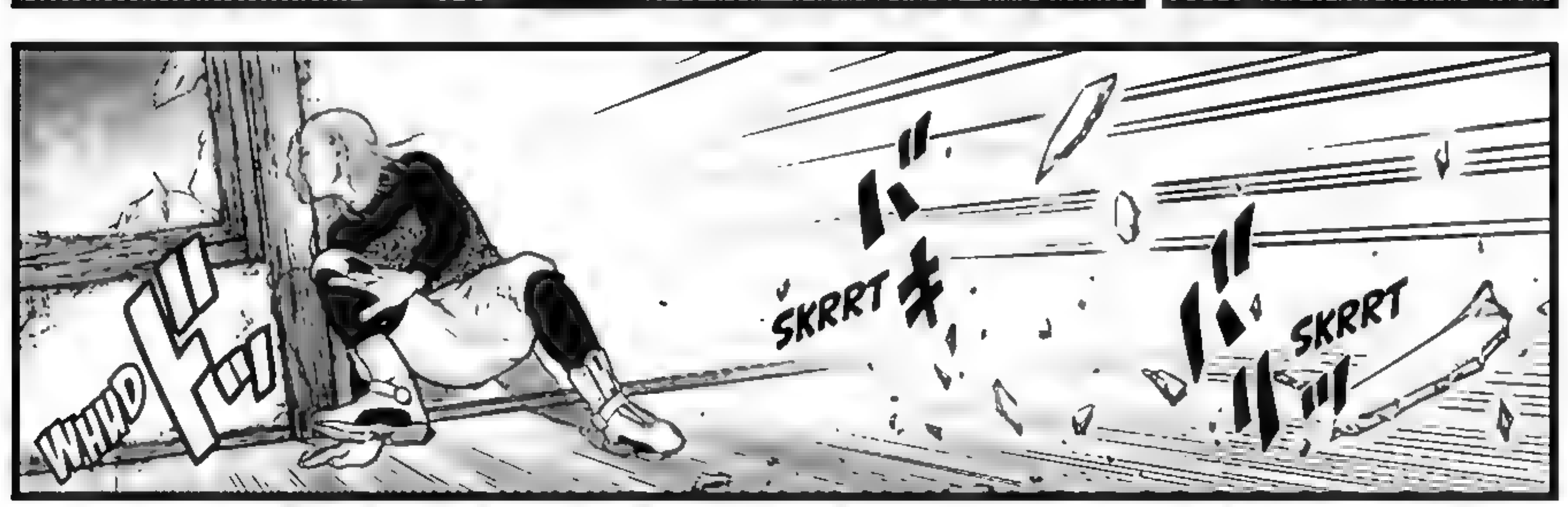
WH-?
GET DOWN!
KA-
BOOOM
NGH!
BOOM

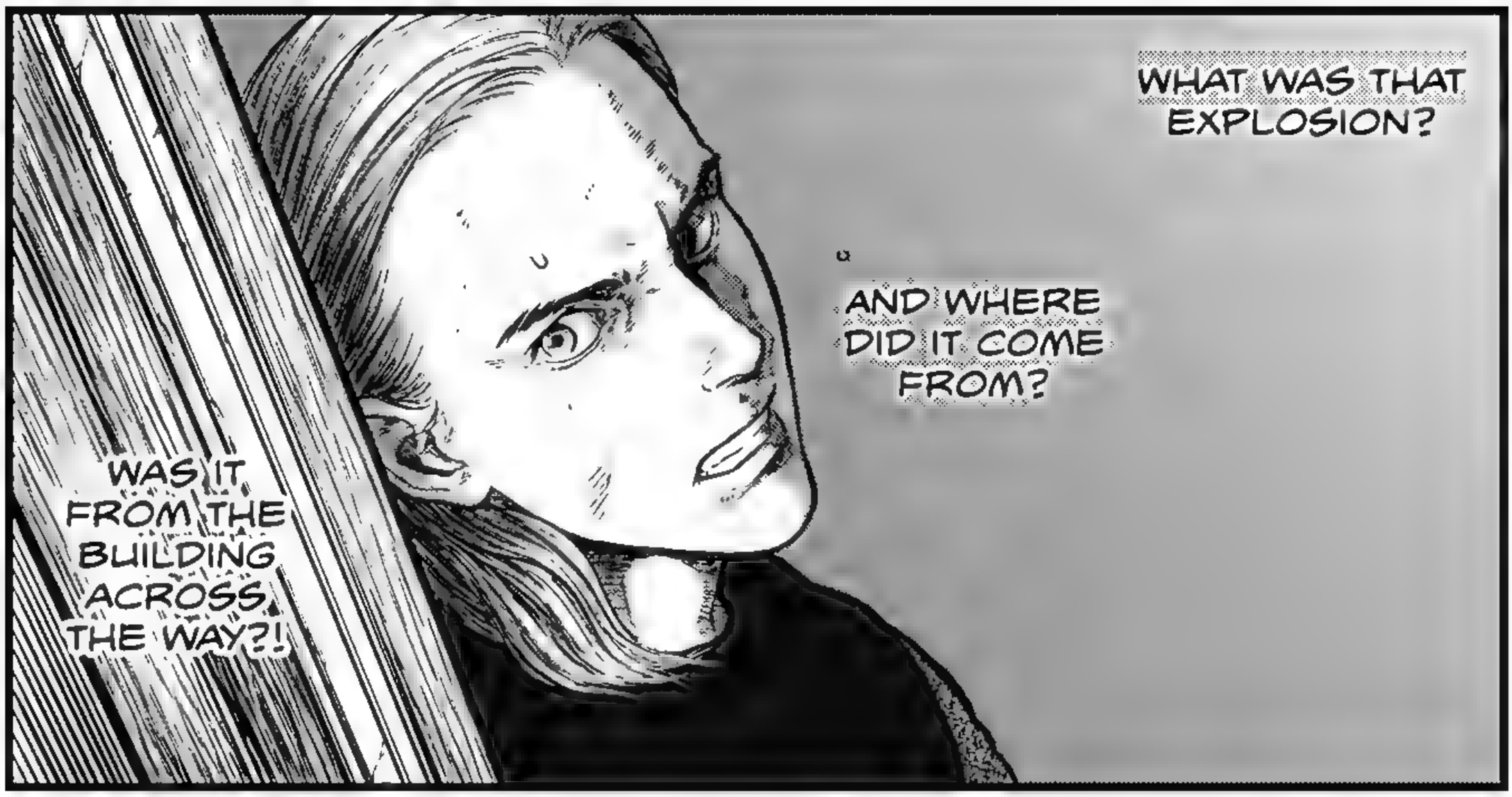
KOFF
KOFF

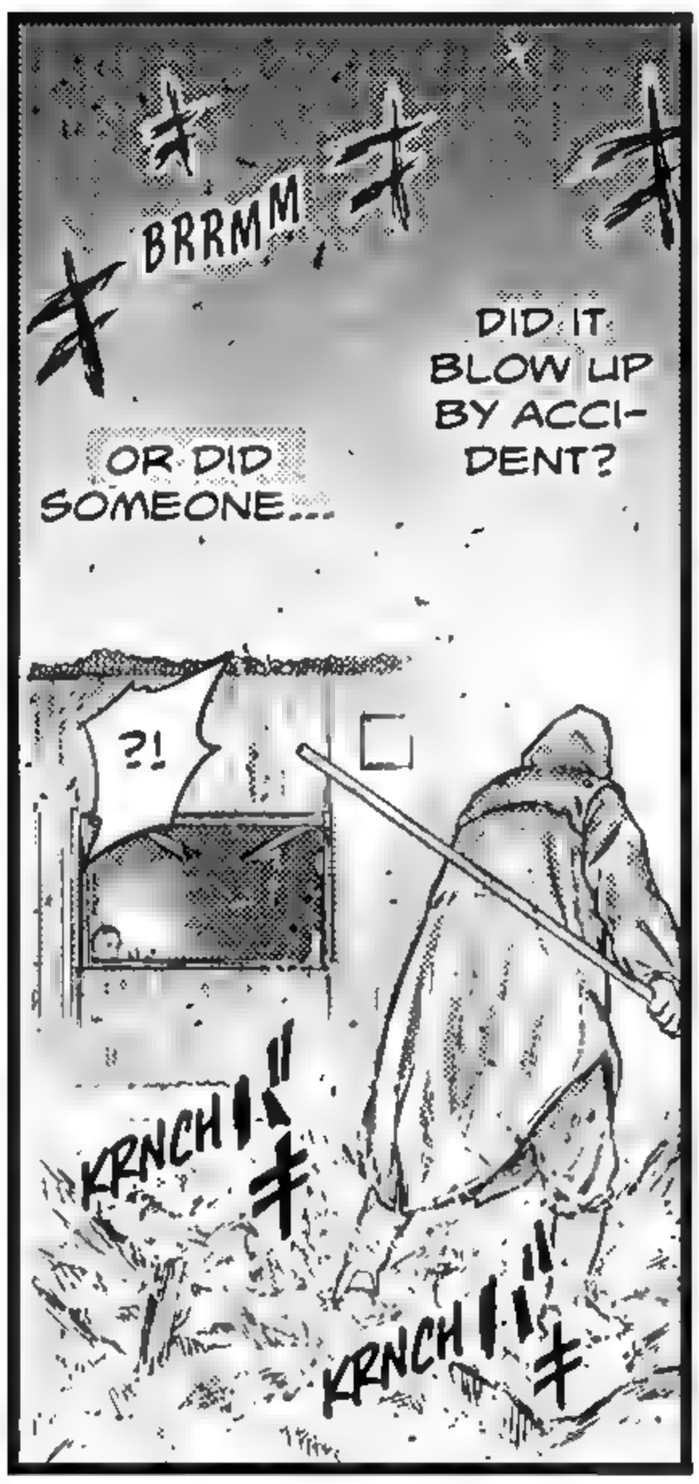
BRRRMMM!!
PATTER
ARE YOU OKAY ?!
HEY!
PATTER

DASH
STAY THERE!

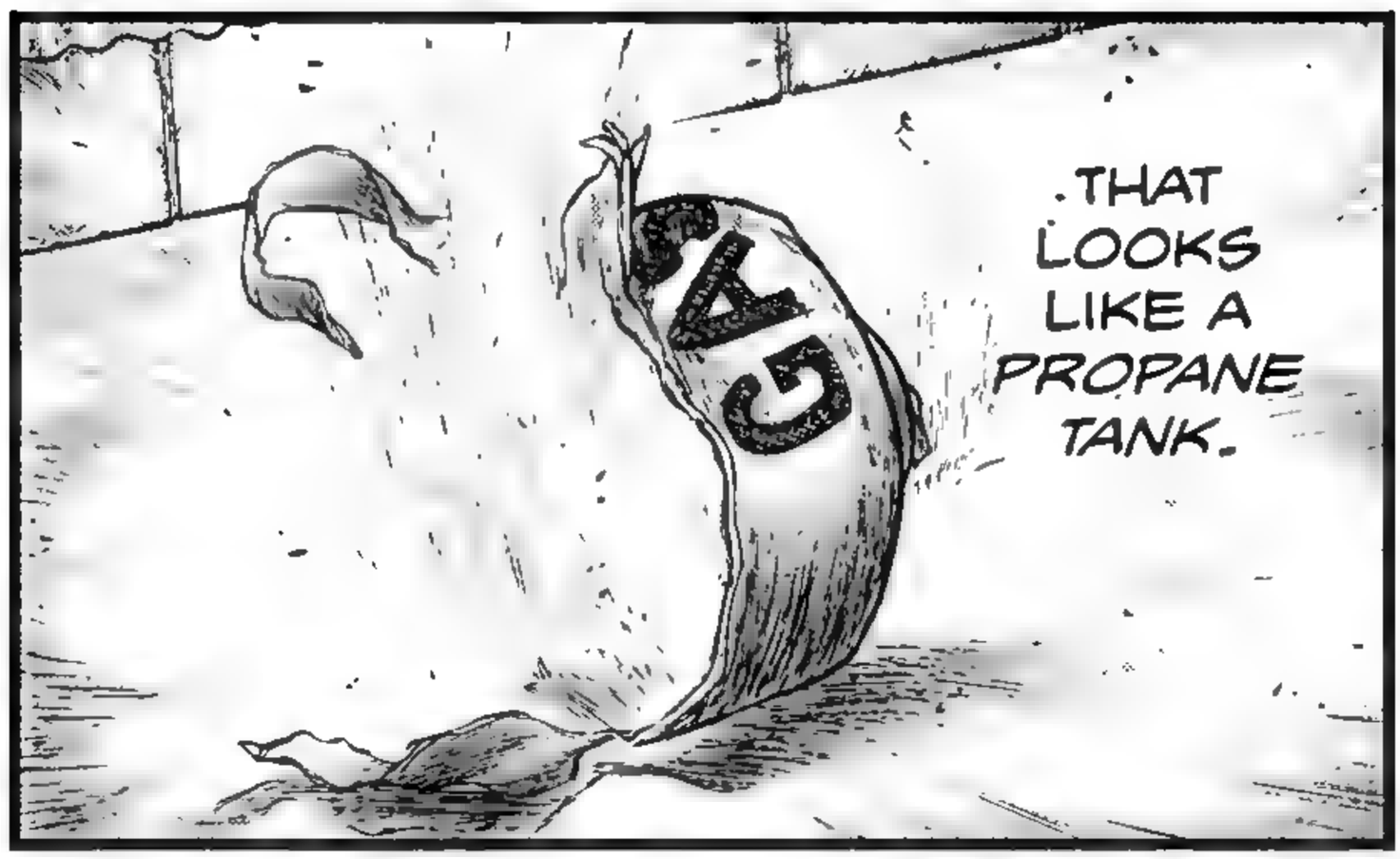
SPRING

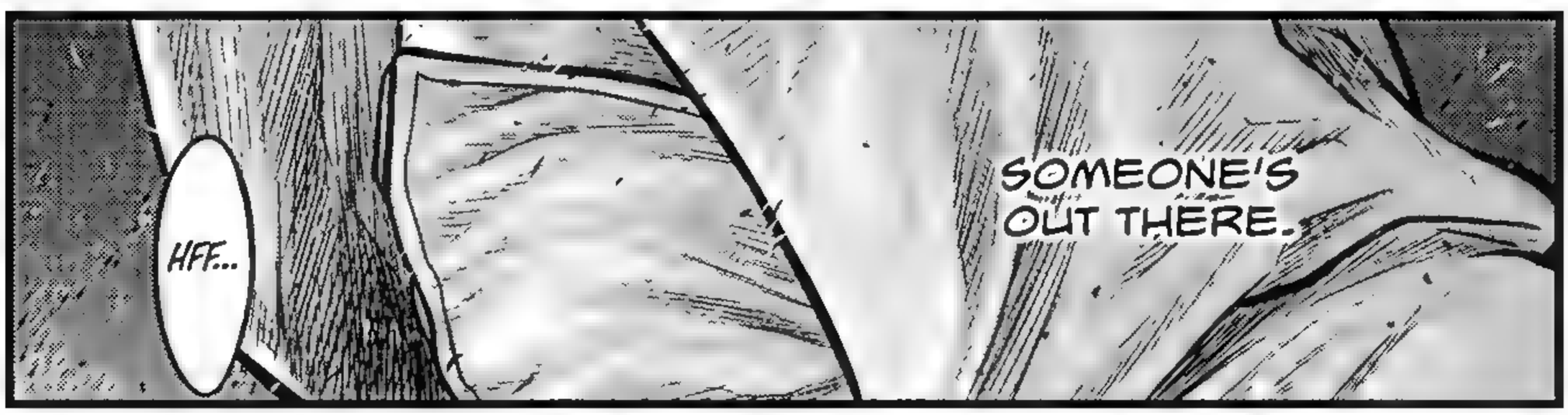

WHUP
SKRRT
SKRRT


WHAT WAS THAT EXPLOSION?
AND WHERE DID IT COME FROM?
WAS IT FROM THE BUILDING ACROSS THE WAY?!


BRRMM
DID IT BLOW UP BY ACCI-DENT?
OR DID SOMEONE...
?!
KRNCH!!
KRNCH!!

?!


GAS
THAT LOOKS LIKE A PROPANE TANK.


HFF...
SOMEONE'S OUT THERE...

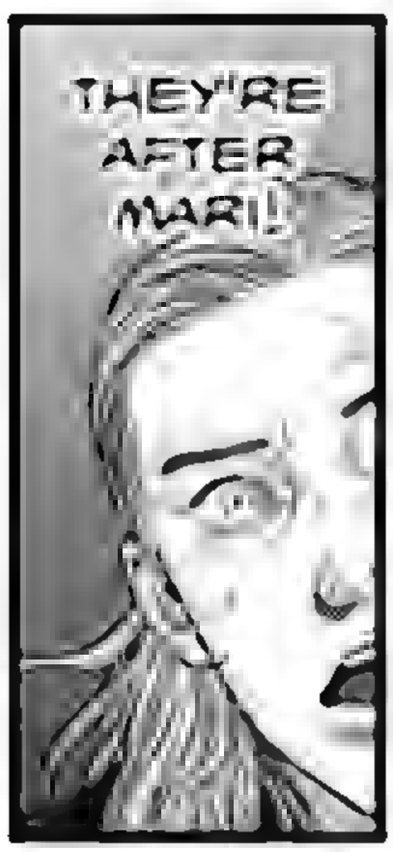
BRRMM

...THE HELL IS THAT?

WHO...

WAS THAT THE ROOM WHERE...?

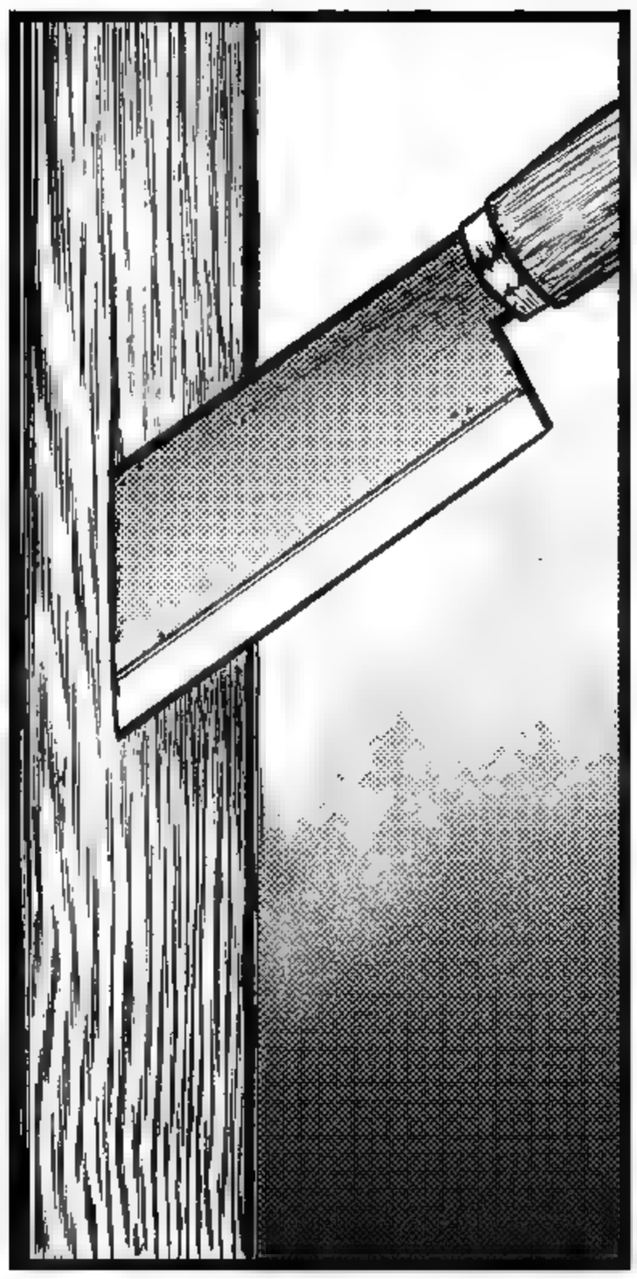
?!
THAT EXPLO-SION...
THAT CAME FROM MY ROOM.

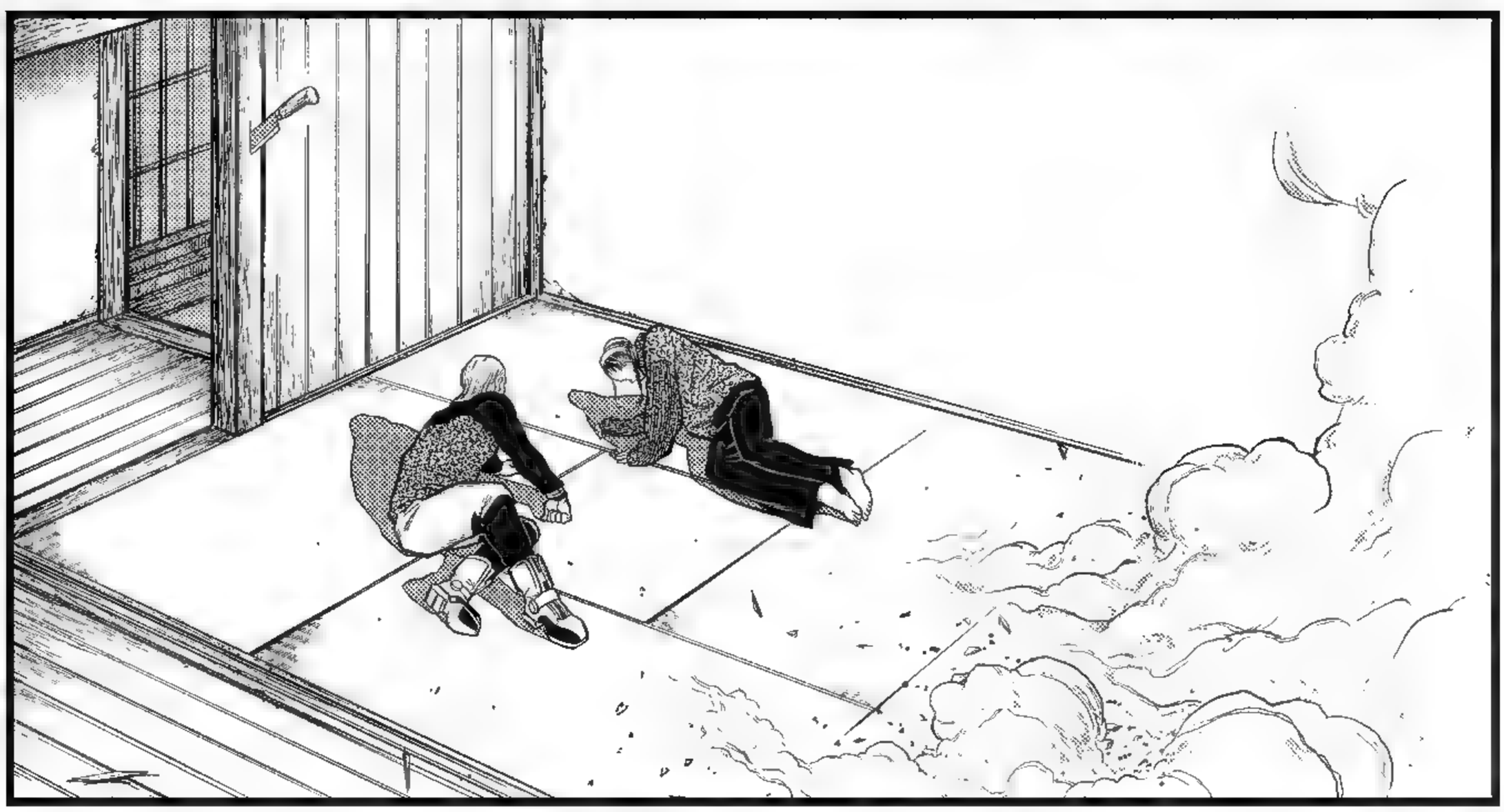

THEY'RE AFTER MARI!

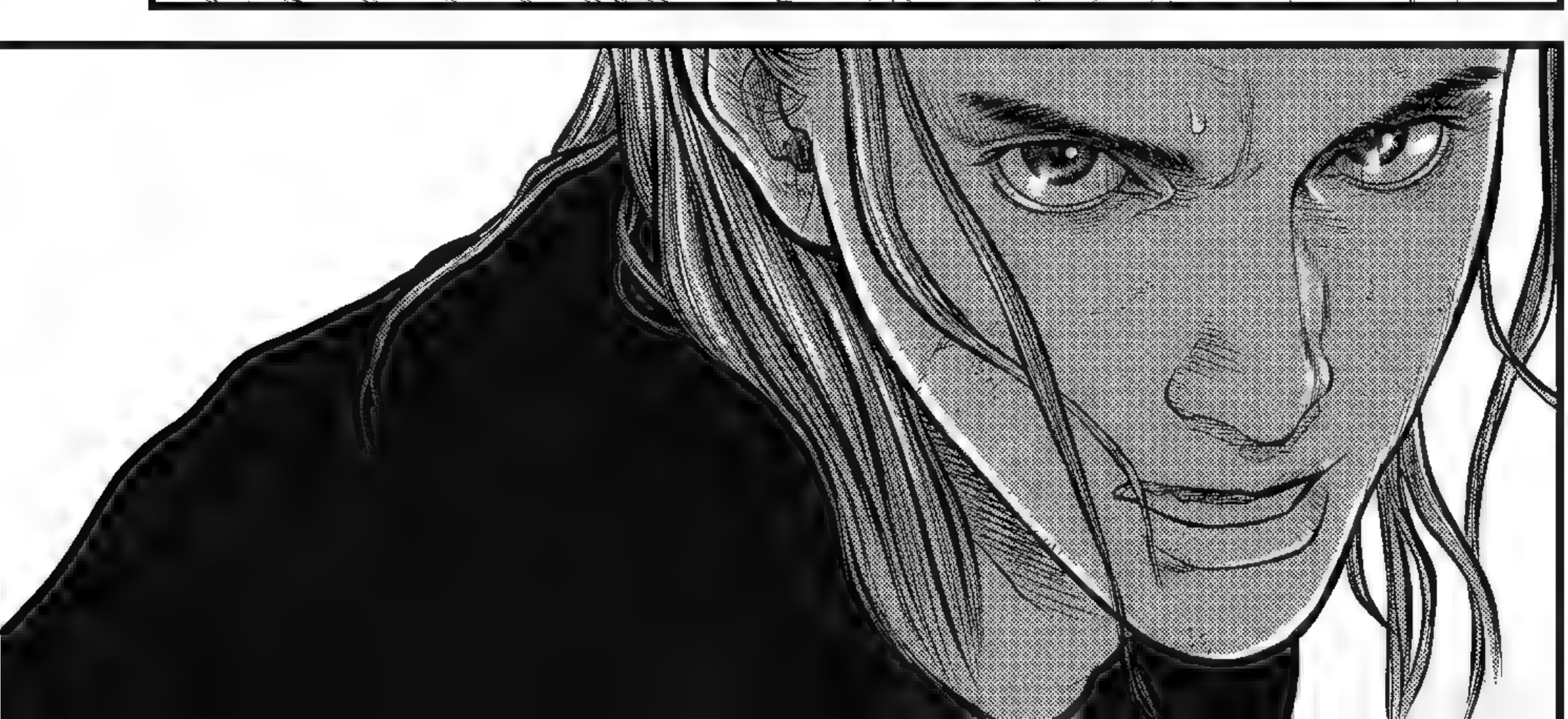
?!

MARI!
GET AWAY FROM THE WIN-DOW!

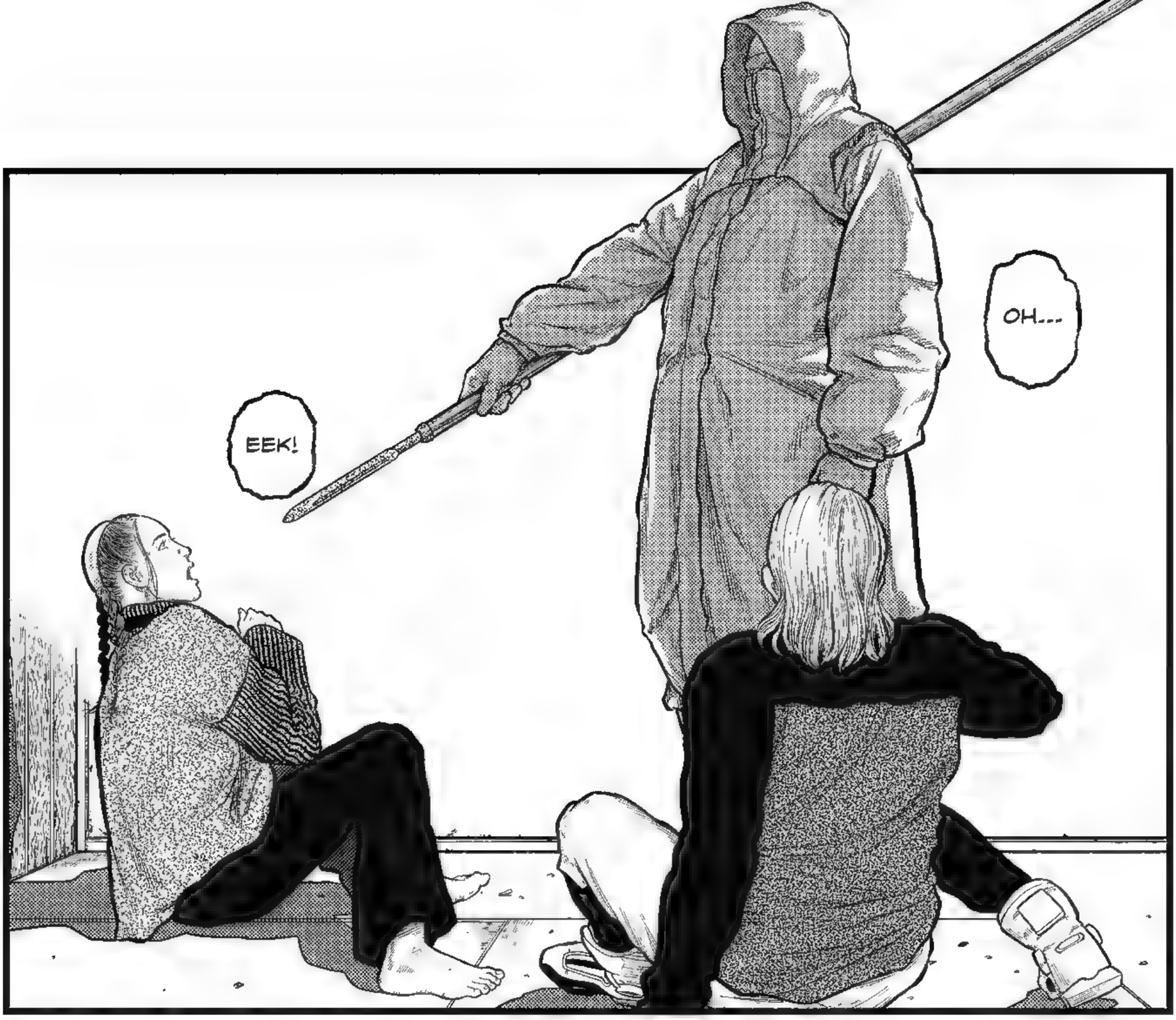
WHIRL
KEEP YOUR HEAD DOWN!
THIS WAY!
?!!

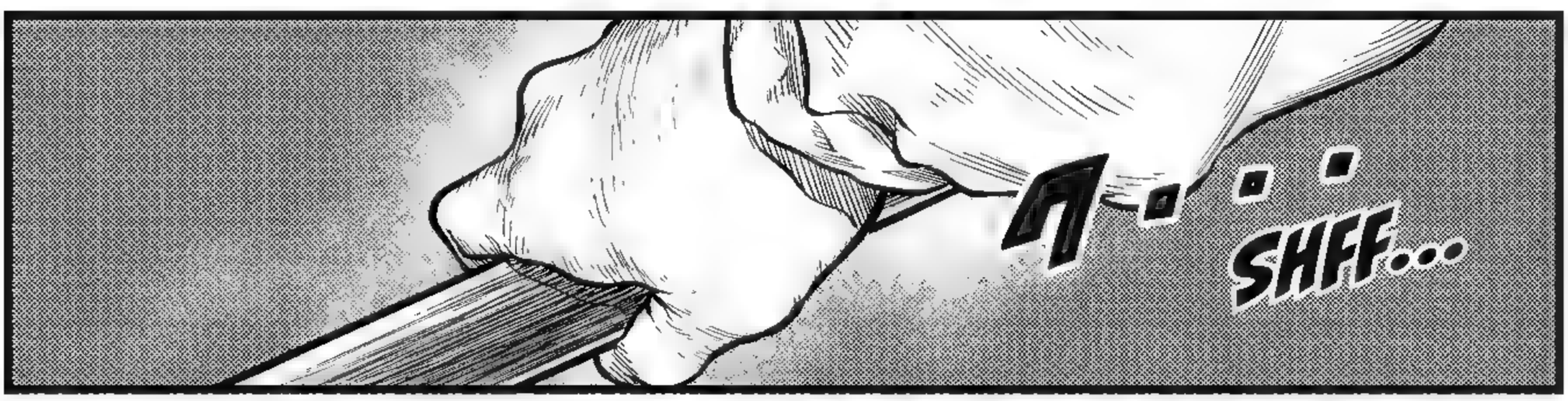




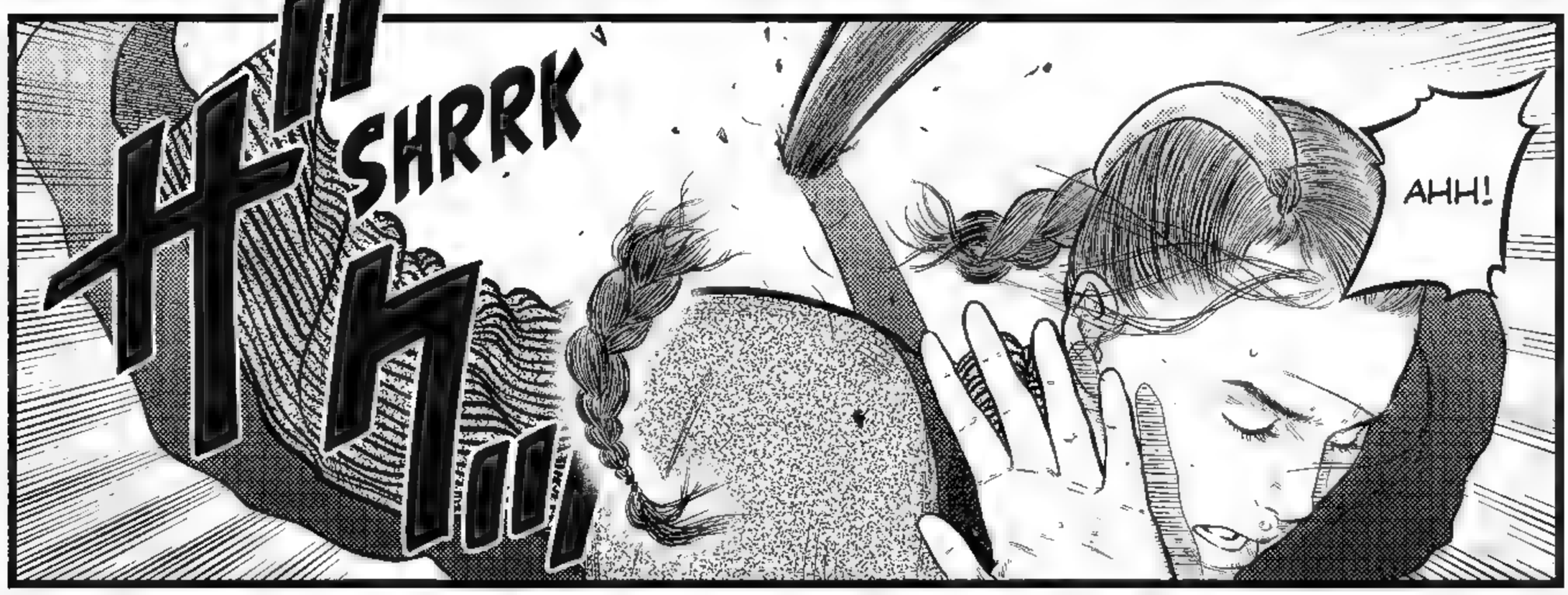


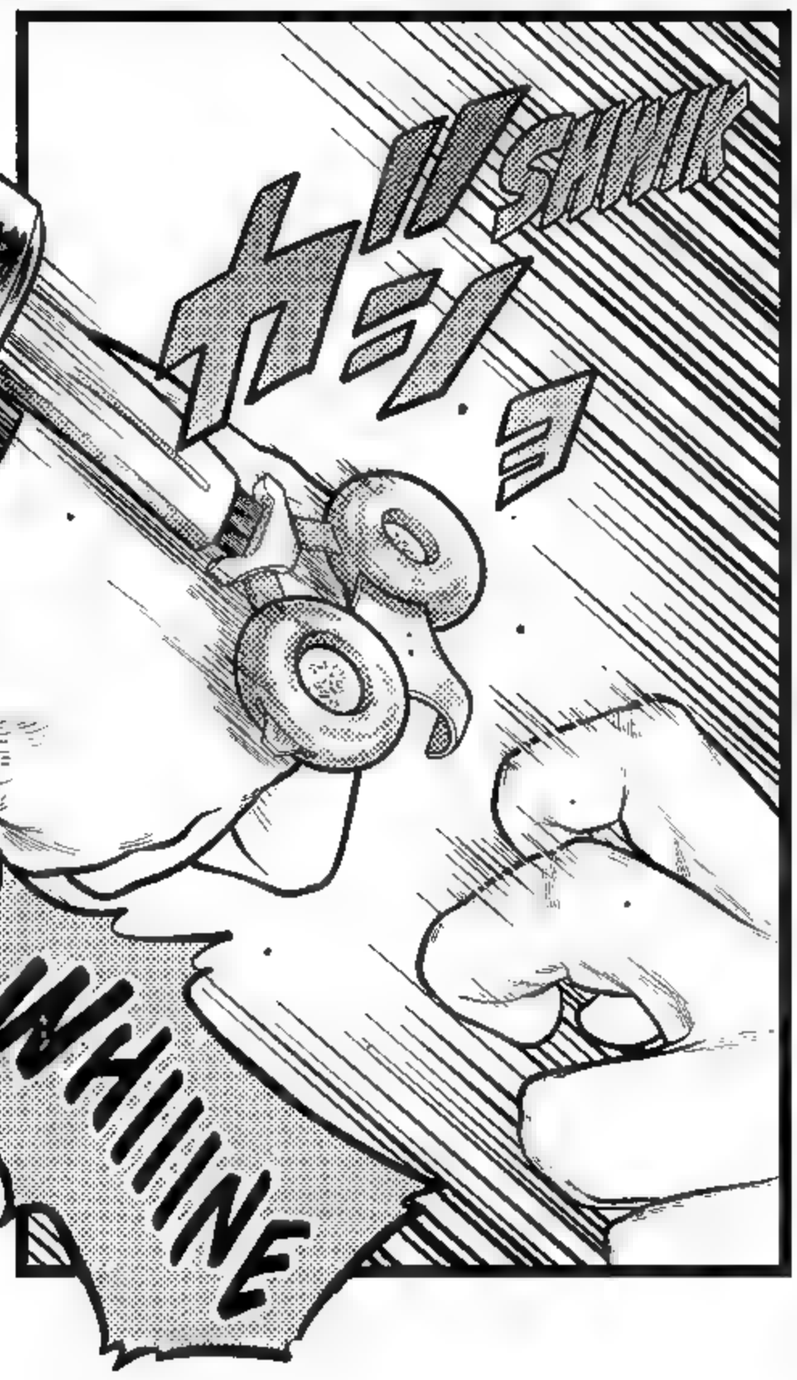
03
WHITE BEAR


EEK!
OH...


A-...
SHFF...

CRACK

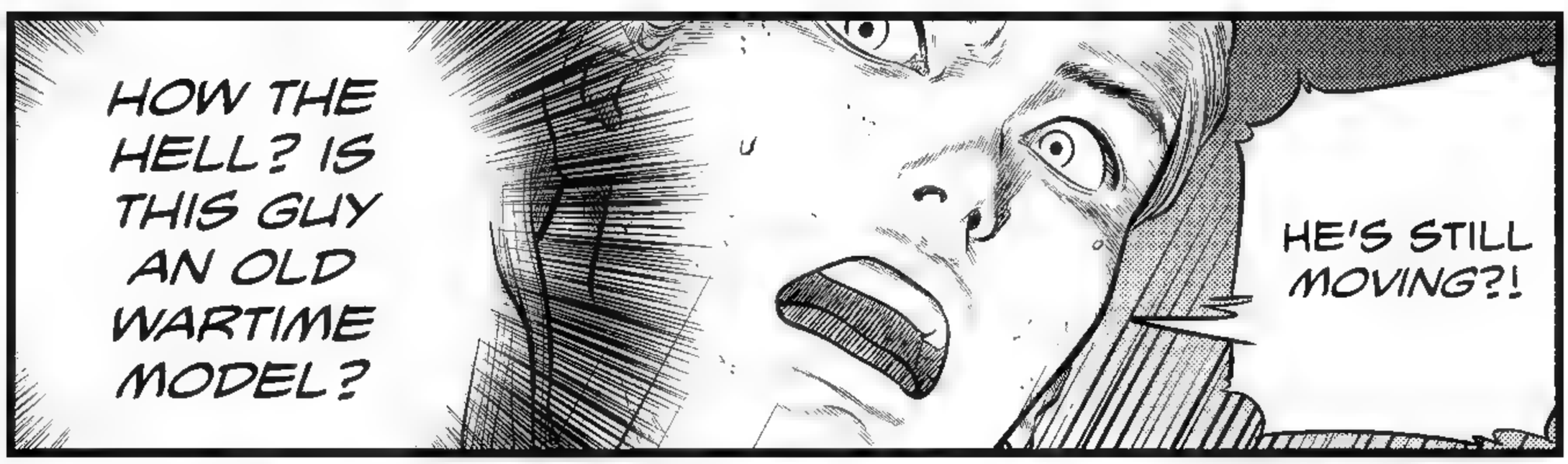

SHRRK
AHH!

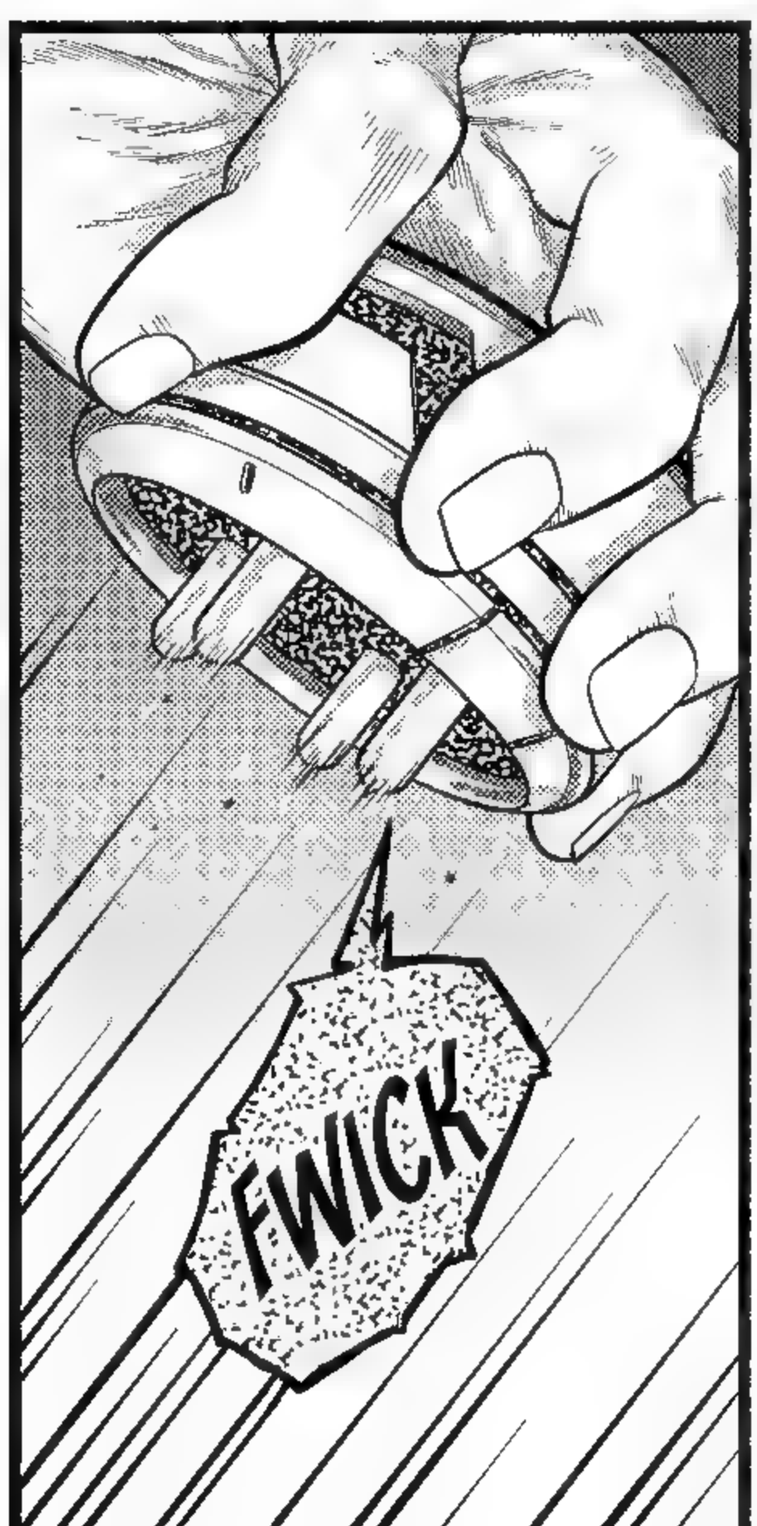

SHWIK
WHIINE

WHAM

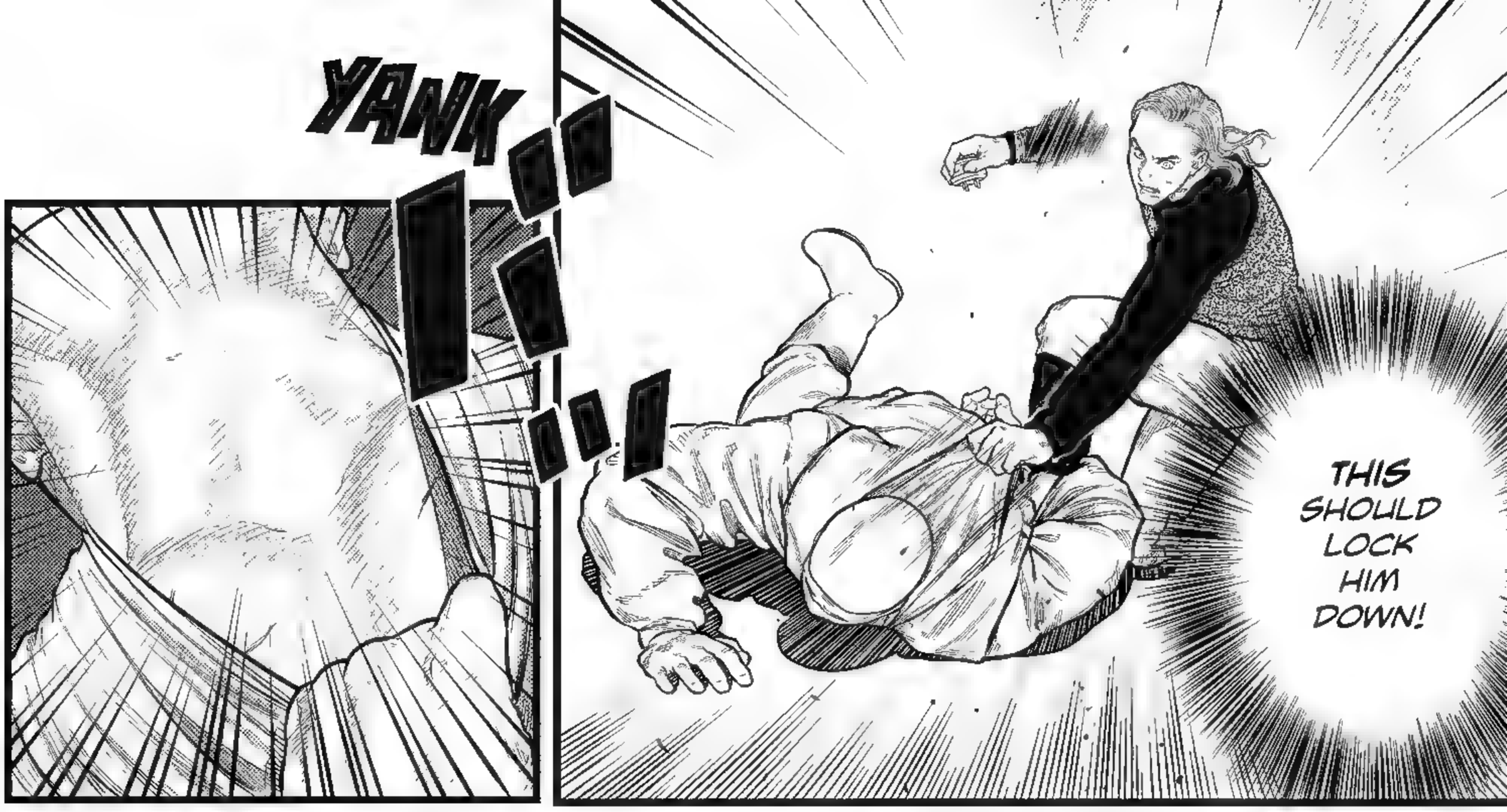
BZZZRRT

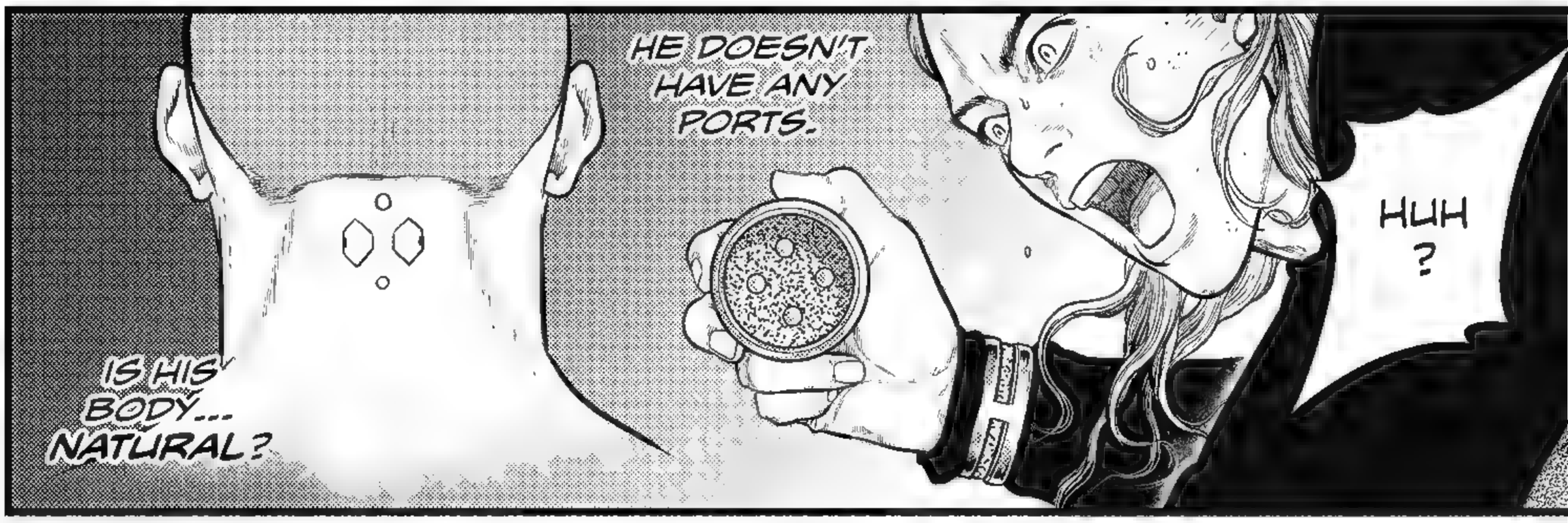
WHUMP


HOW THE HELL? IS THIS GUY AN OLD WARTIME MODEL?
HE'S STILL MOVING?!

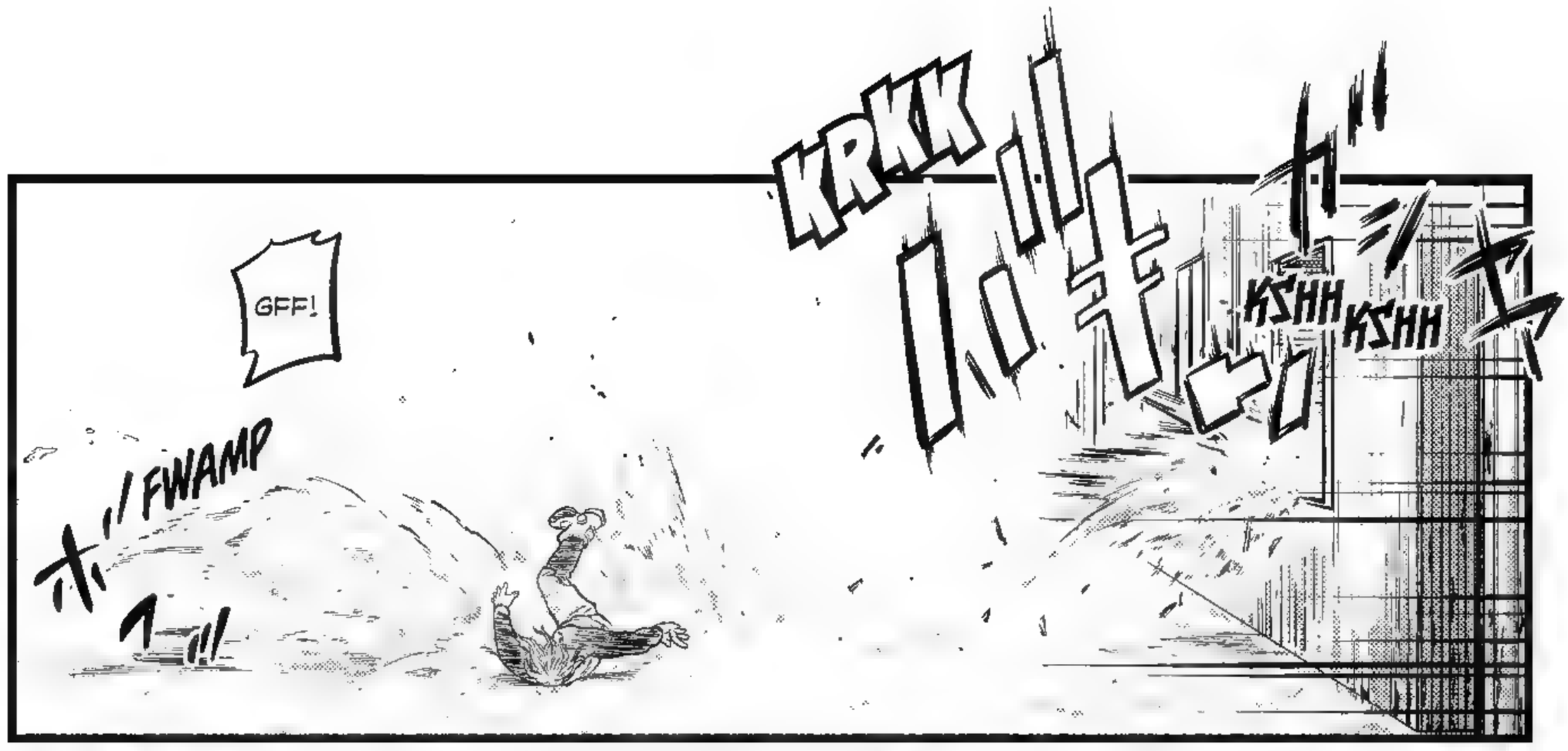

FWICK

IF HE'S THAT STRONG, THEN LET'S TARGET THE CYBER-BRAIN.
STOMP


YANK
THIS SHOULD LOCK HIM DOWN!


HE DOESN'T HAVE ANY PORTS.
HUH ?
IS HIS BODY... NATURAL?

HNGH?
WHOA!


KRKK
KSHH KSHH
GFF!
FWAMP

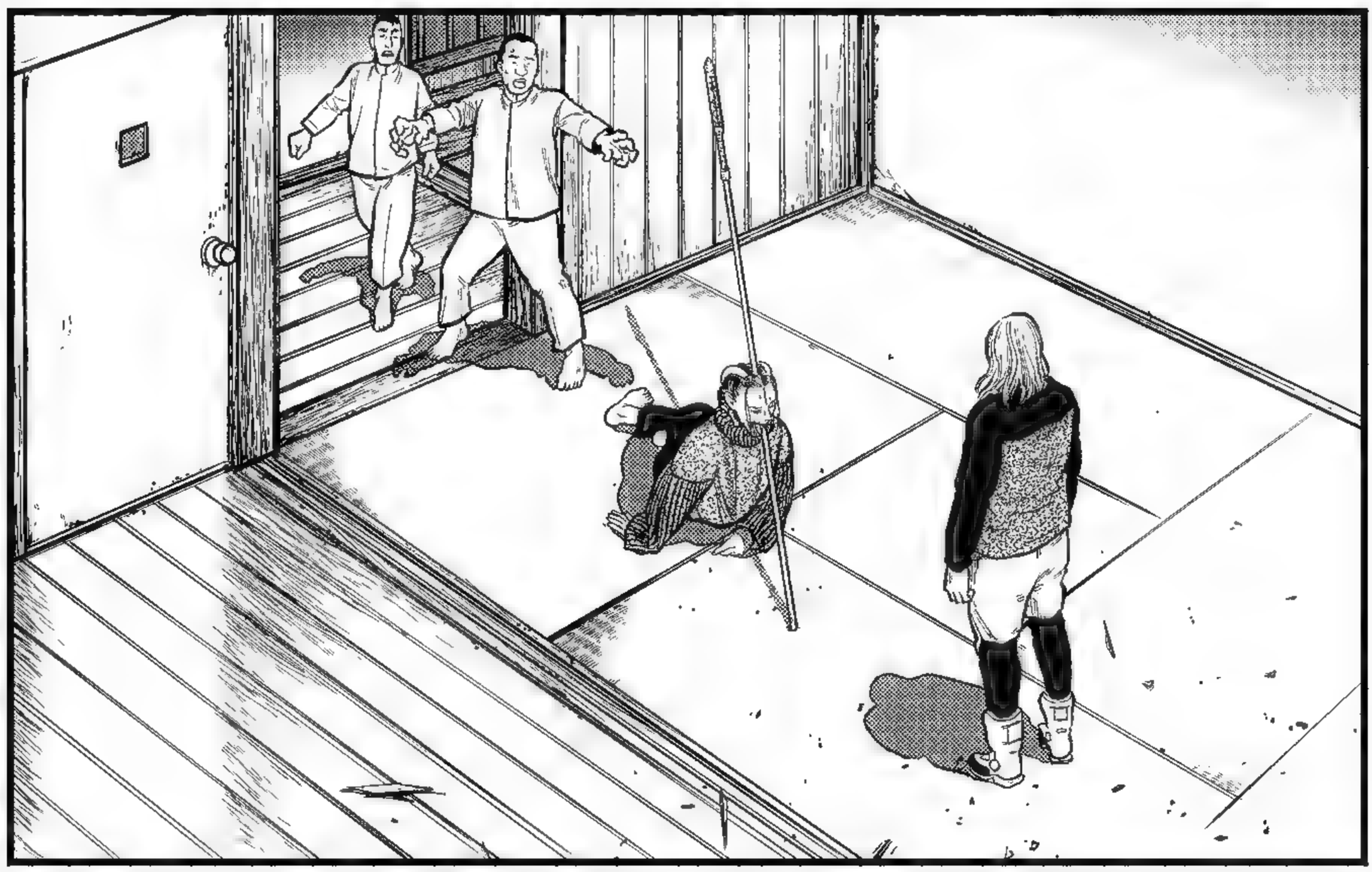
GREAT. LOOKS LIKE MY INFIL-TRATION OP...
...JUST GOT CUT SHORT.
KACHAK

NGH...
OOF...

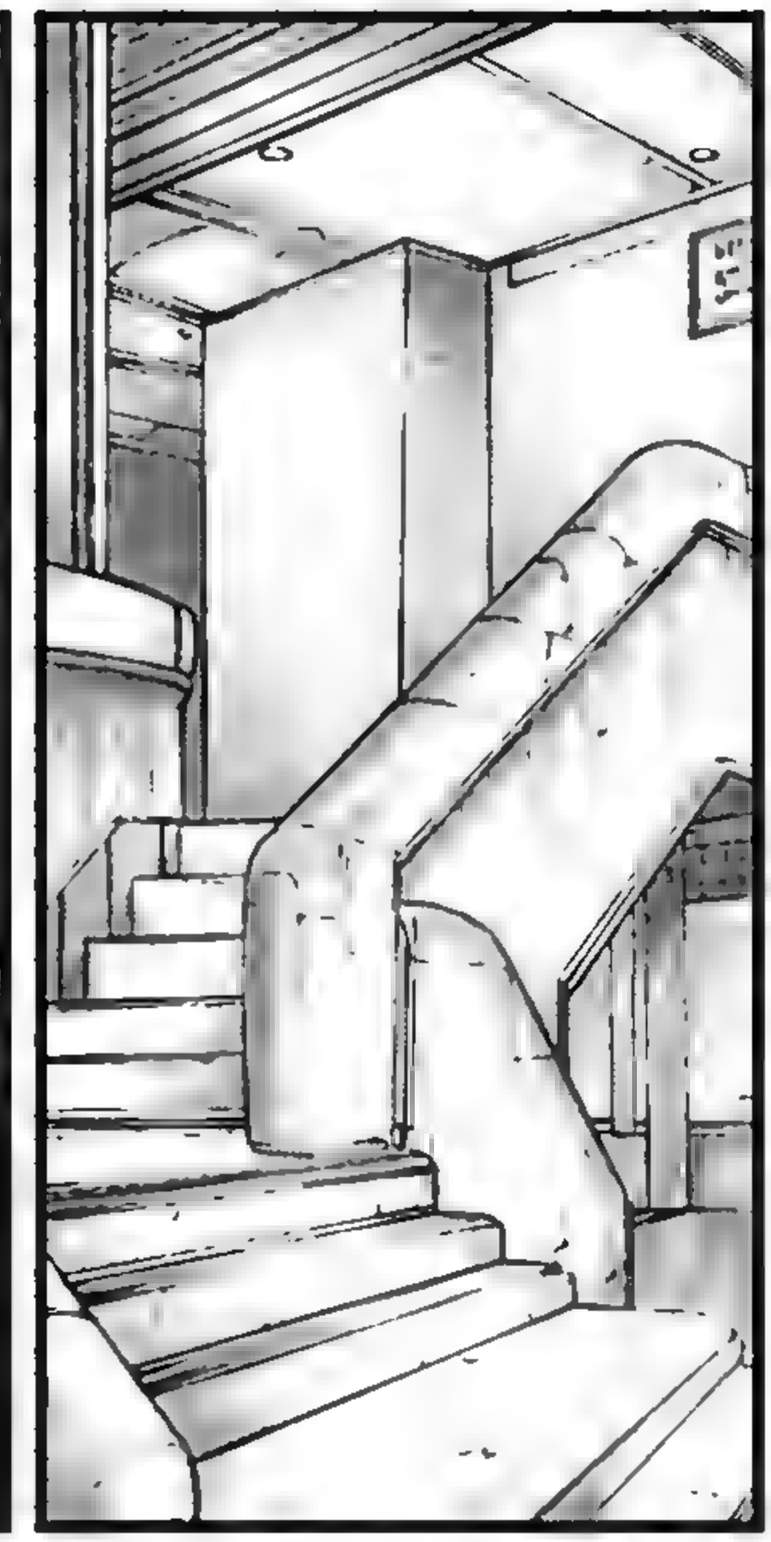
FOOM
FOOM

MISTER TOGUSA! WHAT IS GOING ON?!
MISTER TOGUSA!

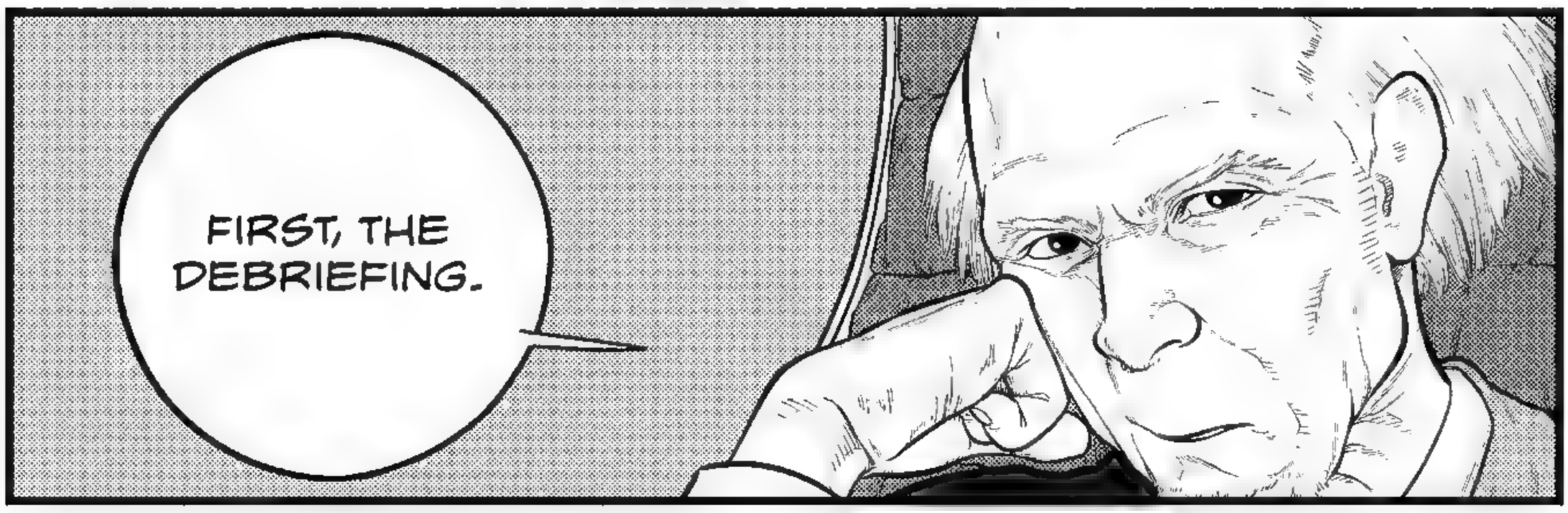
ゴ!!
BRRMMM
WE'VE GOTTA PUT IT OUT!
THE DORMI-TORY'S ON FIRE!



I WANT
ANSWERS,
CHIEF!



HOW LONG WERE YOU GONNA KEEP ME IN THE DARK?!
THE MAJOR'S PROSTHETIC! IN TOHOKU! IS IT TRUE?!


FIRST, THE DEBRIEFING.

EEP!
SLAM
GET ON IT, AZUMA!

AHA-HA...
VERY WELL. ALLOW ME TO BEGIN OUR REPORT, CHIEF.

AS PART OF THE INVESTIGATION INTO THE ATTACK MADE DURING COUNCILOR MIKOMOTO'S PUBLIC ADDRESS...

FLICKER

...WE PROCEEDED TO OSAKI HEAVY INDUSTRIES, WHERE THE HI-JACKED TYPE-29S WERE ORIGINALLY MANUFAC-TURED.

THEIR ON-SITE STANDALONE NET CONTAINED EVIDENCE SUGGESTING THAT...

...SOMEONE HAD TAMPERED WITH THE SERVICE RE-CORDS FOR ALL THIRTEEN OF THE HACKED PROS-THETICS.

FLICKER

THAT LED US TO THIS INDIVIDUAL. A MECHANIC EMPLOYED AT OSAKI.

ACCORDING TO HIS COWORKERS, HE UP AND VANISHED APPROXIMATELY ONE MONTH AGO.

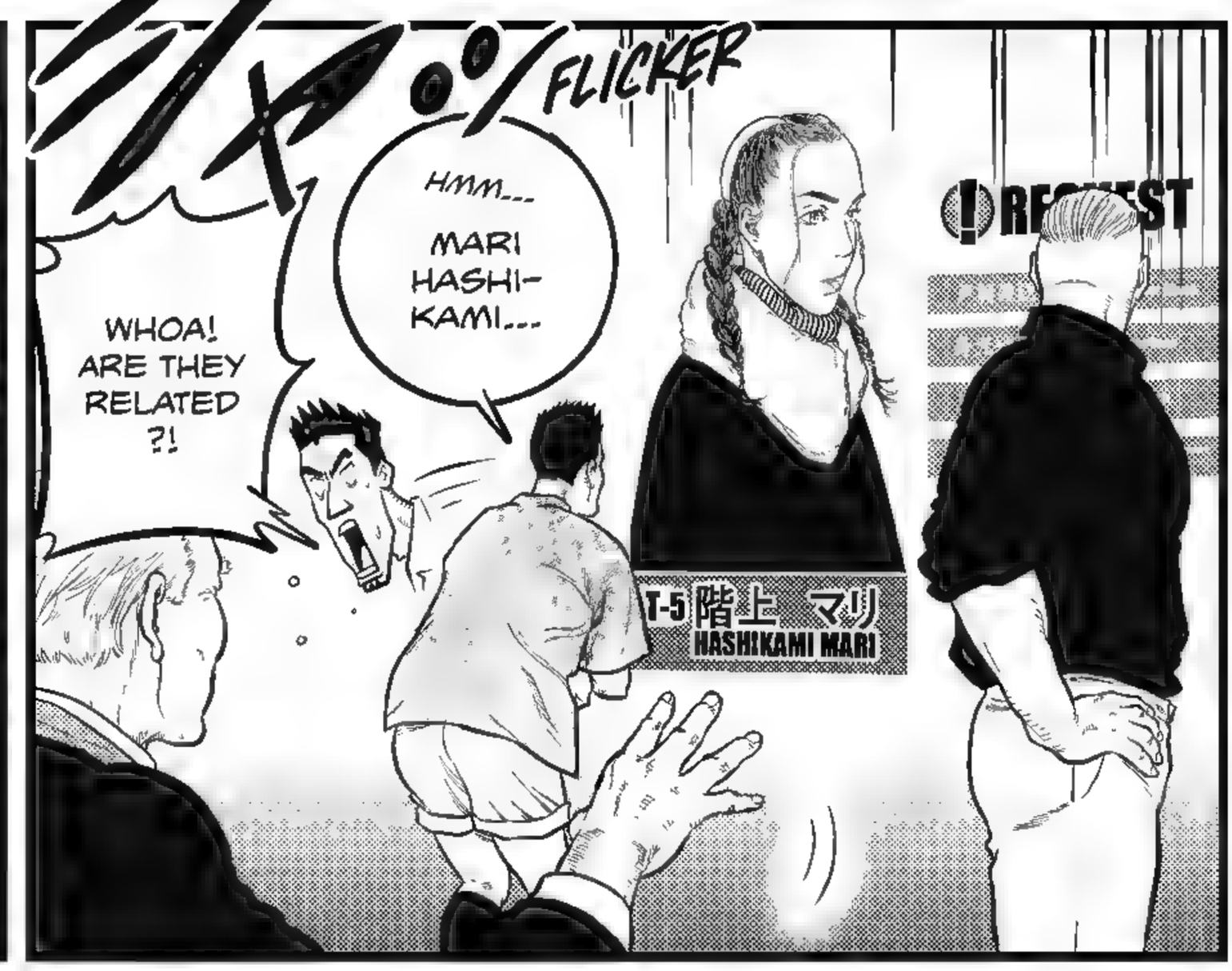
HIS EMPLOYER FILED A MISSING PERSONS REPORT.

NO CRIMINAL RECORD. WHERE-ABOUTS UNKNOWN.

WHAT'S THE DEAL, CHIEF? YOU HEARD OF THE KID?
BEEP
BEEP

HIS SUR-NAME'S QUITE THE MOUTH-FUL.
YEAH.
HASHIKAMI. I THOUGHT SO, TOO.
WAIT. HAVEN'T I...?

WHO'S THE BROAD?


FLICKER
HMM... MARI HASHI-KAMI...
WHOA! ARE THEY RELATED ?!
REQUEST
T-5 階上 マリ
HASHIKAMI MARI

REQUEST
HUH?
SOMEONE IN TOHOKU WHO CAUGHT TOGUSA'S ATTENTION.
LOOK AT THIS. TOGUSA ASKED TO HAVE HER FAMILY REGIS-TER PULLED. WHAT'S THAT ABOUT?

BEFORE SHE WAS ADOPTED BY HER STEPFATHER, SHE LIVED WITH A SISTER. ONE *SHINRA MIKOMOTO*.

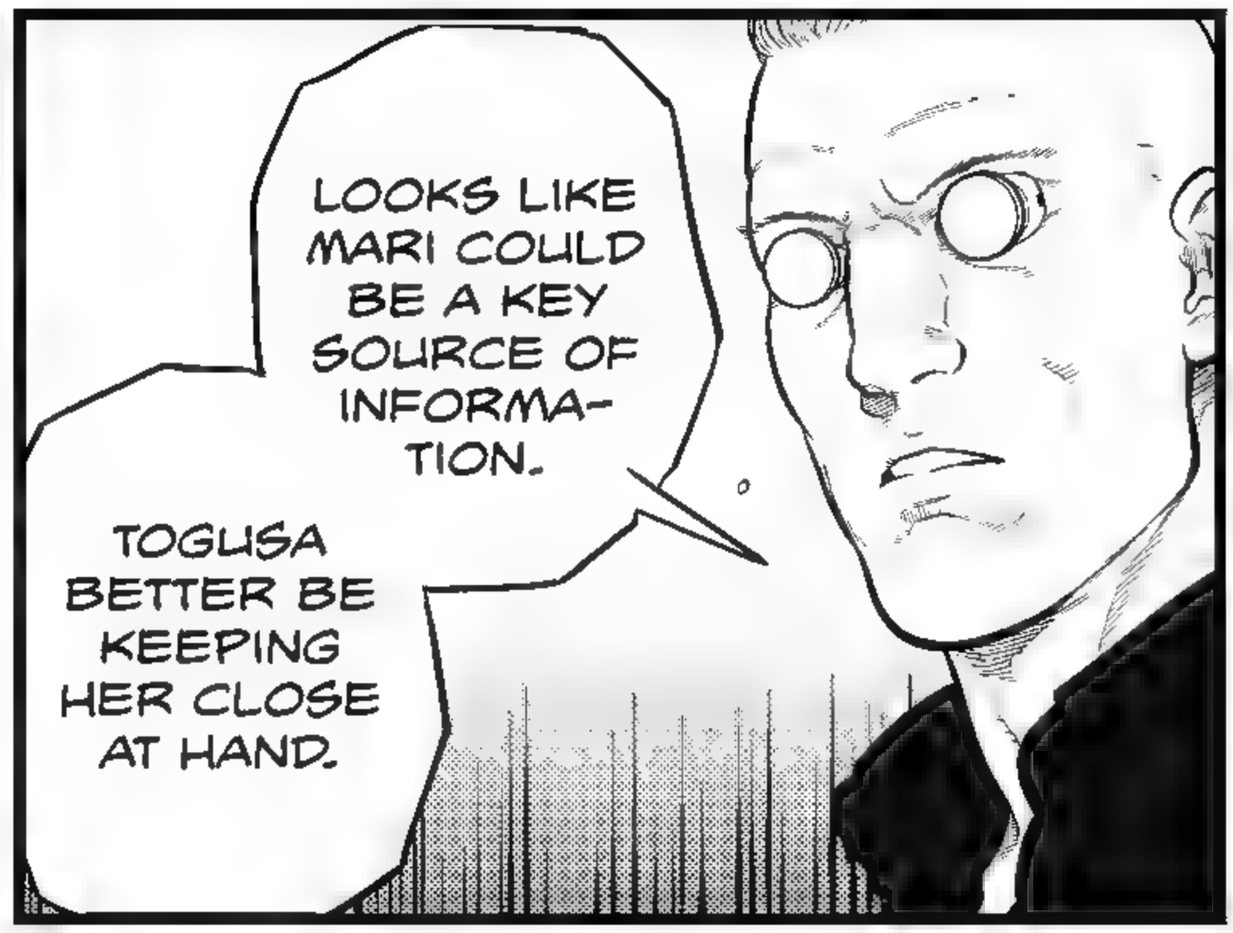
MARI WASN'T LISTED ON HERE UNTIL AGE EIGHT. AND IT GETS BETTER.

WHOA! THERE'S OUR SHOH HASHIKAMI, RIGHT ON THE REGISTER. THEY'RE SIBLINGS.

NO WAY!

...

YEAH. BUT READ THE FINE PRINT. NOT BY BLOOD.



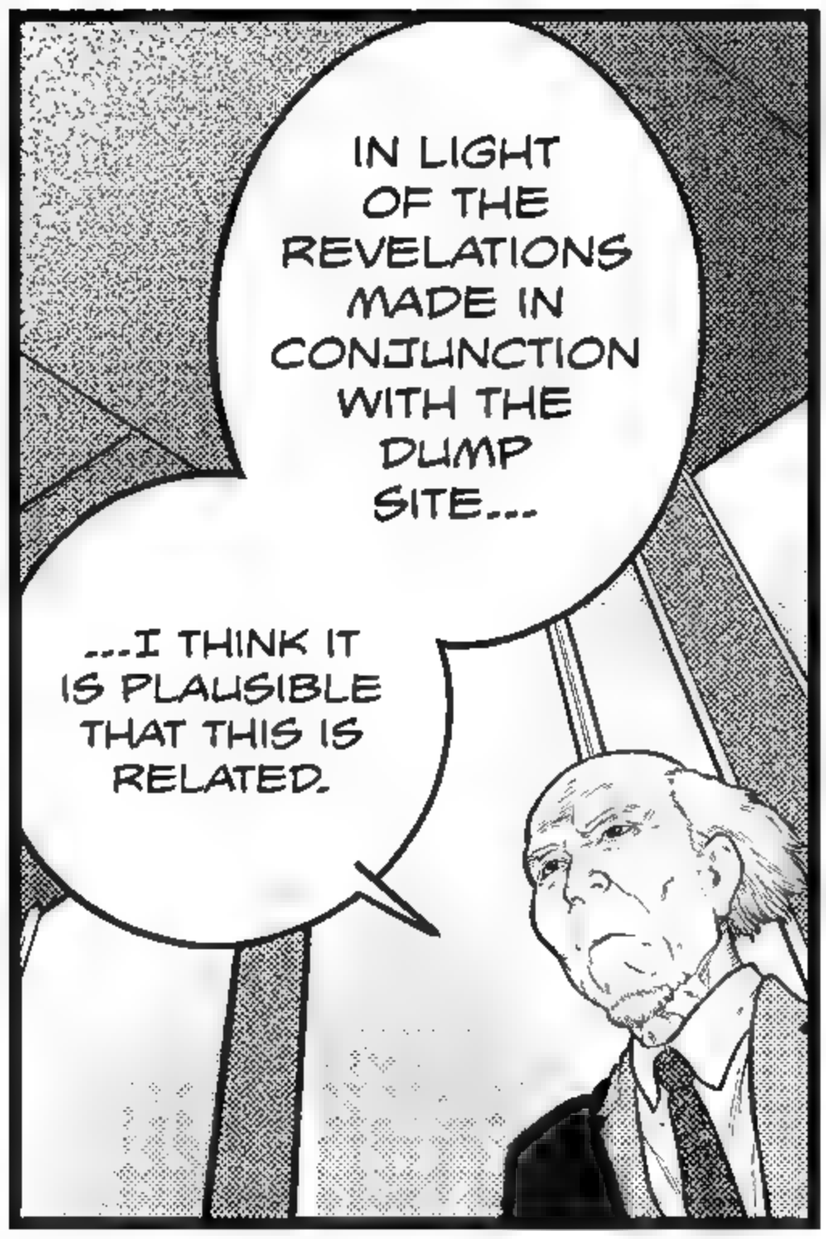
THE DAUGHTER, MARI, PAID A VISIT TO THE VILLAGE TO FIND OUT ABOUT HER STEPFATHER'S DEATH.
SHE WAS BRUTALLY MURDERED RIGHT BEFORE TOGUSA'S EYES.

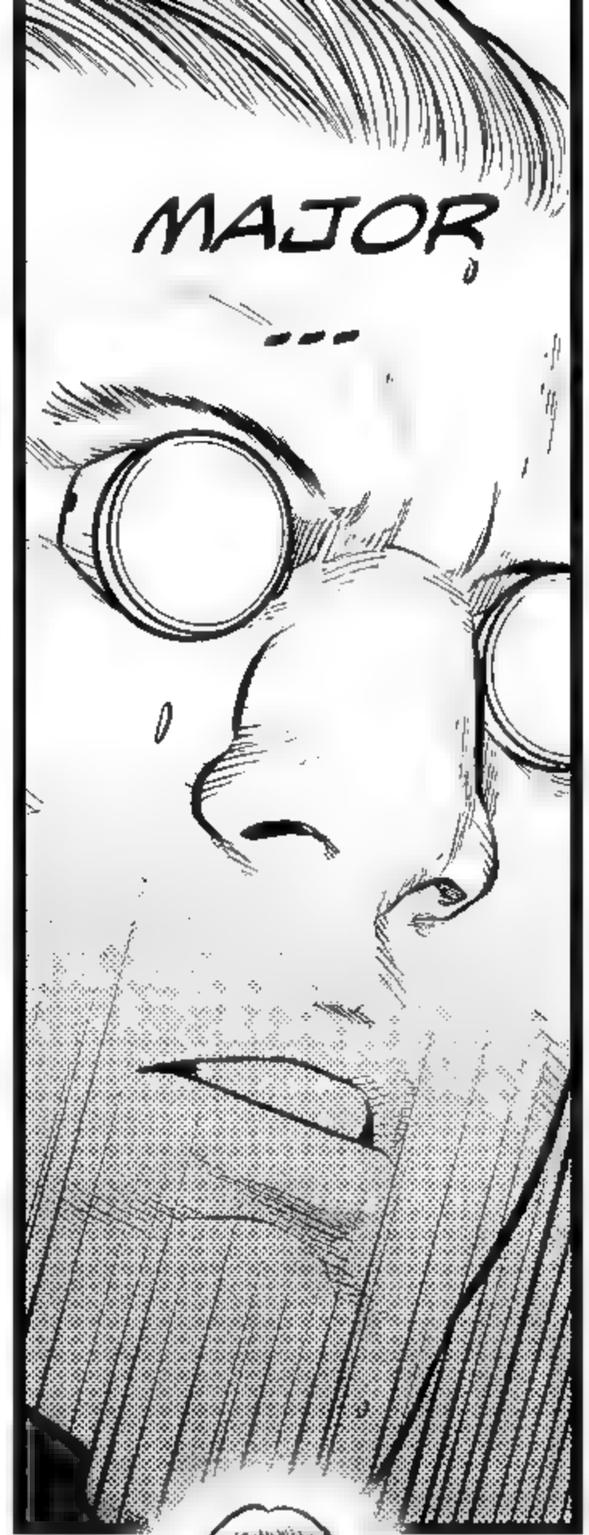
MARI HASHIKAMI'S STEPFATHER WAS AN ADHERENT OF ATERUI.
NEVER HEARD OF IT.
OH, YEAH. THAT "CORPOREAL FUNDAMENTALIST" GROUP.
CURL
CURL

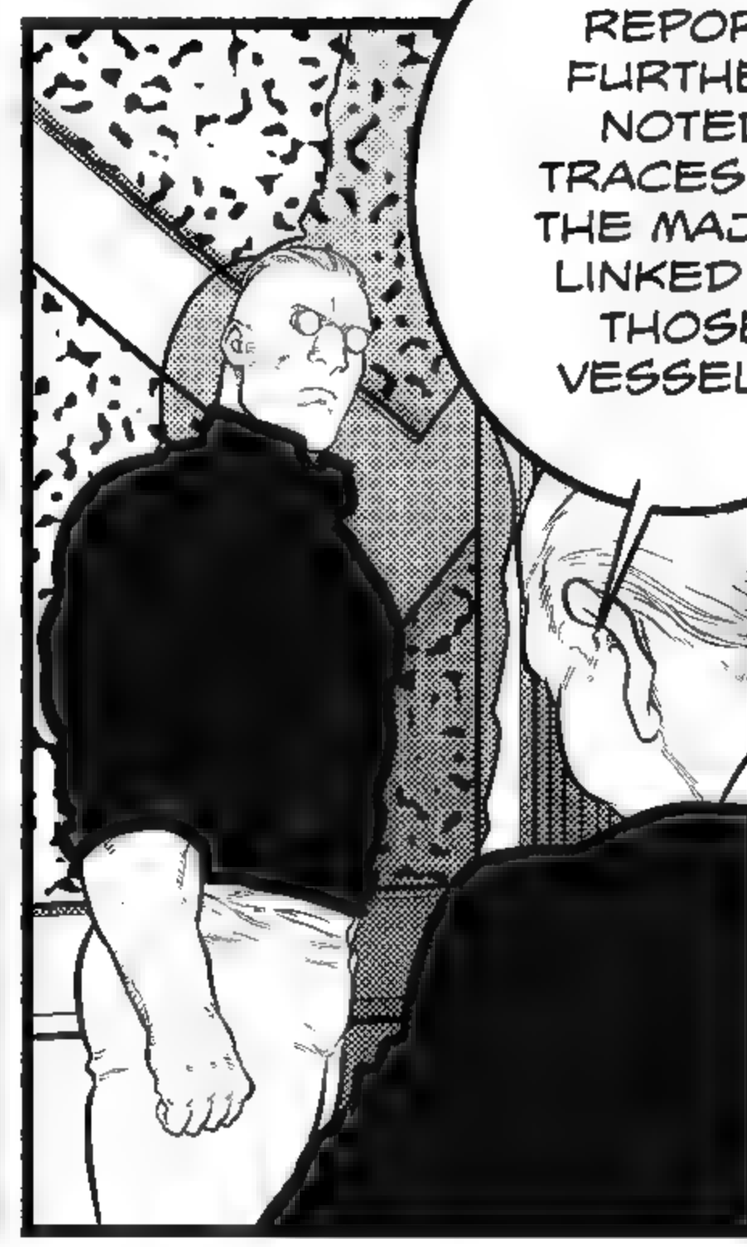
IT SEEMS THE STEPFATHER FLED THE ATERUI COMMUNITY ABOUT A MONTH AGO.
HIS PROSTHETIC SHOWED UP IN THE SAME DUMP SITE WE'D BEEN INVESTIGATING.

NOW WE HAVE EVIDENCE OF A STEPBROTHER ON THE RUN AFTER TAMPERING WITH SERVICE RECORDS AT OSAKI.
THE SAME MANUFACTURER OF THE PROSTHETICS USED IN THE ATTEMPT ON THE ELDER SISTER'S LIFE.

I'VE GOT THIS. WANNA FOLLOW-UP ON THE MAJOR, ANYWAY.
NOT SO FAST.
...GET KILLED, I'D SAY TOGU-SA'S NOT UP TO THE TASK.
GIVEN THE WAY HE LET OUR KEY PERSON ...
WHERE ARE YOU HEADED?
THE HELL, CHIEF ?!
I'VE GOT SOMETHING ELSE IN MIND FOR YOU.
PRETTY TWISTED WEB WE'VE GOT GOING.
WHIRL
I WANT YOU TO RENDEZVOUS WITH ISHIKAWA AND FIND OUT WHAT THEY'RE UP TO.
...OF HIGHLY POLLUTED WATERS, ABOUT SIX KILOMETERS OFF THE OKINAWAN ATOLL.
WE'VE HAD A REPORT OF NUMEROUS SUSPICIOUS VESSELS ANCHORED IN A REGION...
TRYING TO KEEP ME BUSY AND OUT OF THE LOOP?
WHAT IS THIS, SOME KIND OF DISTRACTION?


IN LIGHT OF THE REVELATIONS MADE IN CONJUNCTION WITH THE DUMP SITE...
...I THINK IT IS PLAUSIBLE THAT THIS IS RELATED.

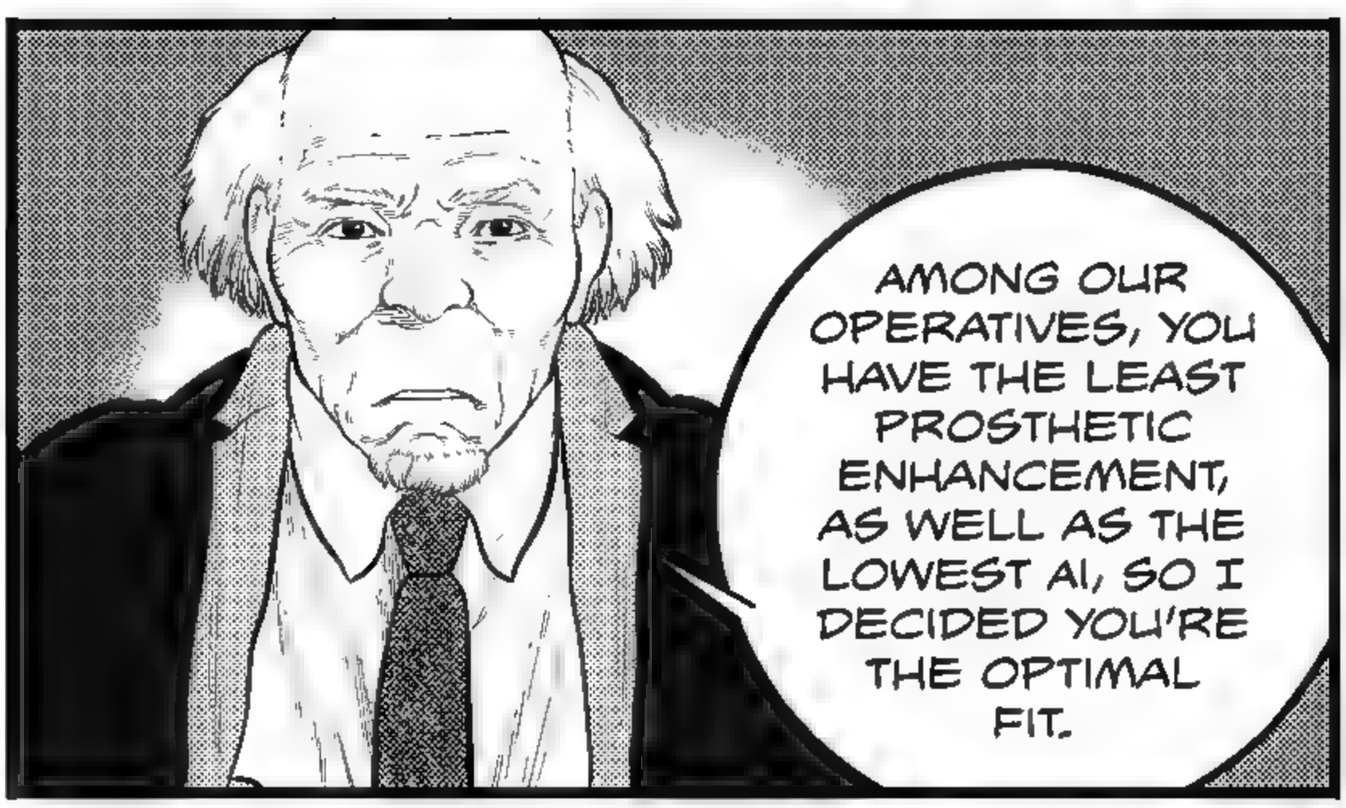

MAJOR
...


THE REPORT FURTHER NOTED TRACES OF THE MAJOR LINKED TO THOSE VESSELS.

BATOU, I'M PUTTING YOU IN CHARGE...
...OF CHASING DOWN THE MAJOR'S GHOST.

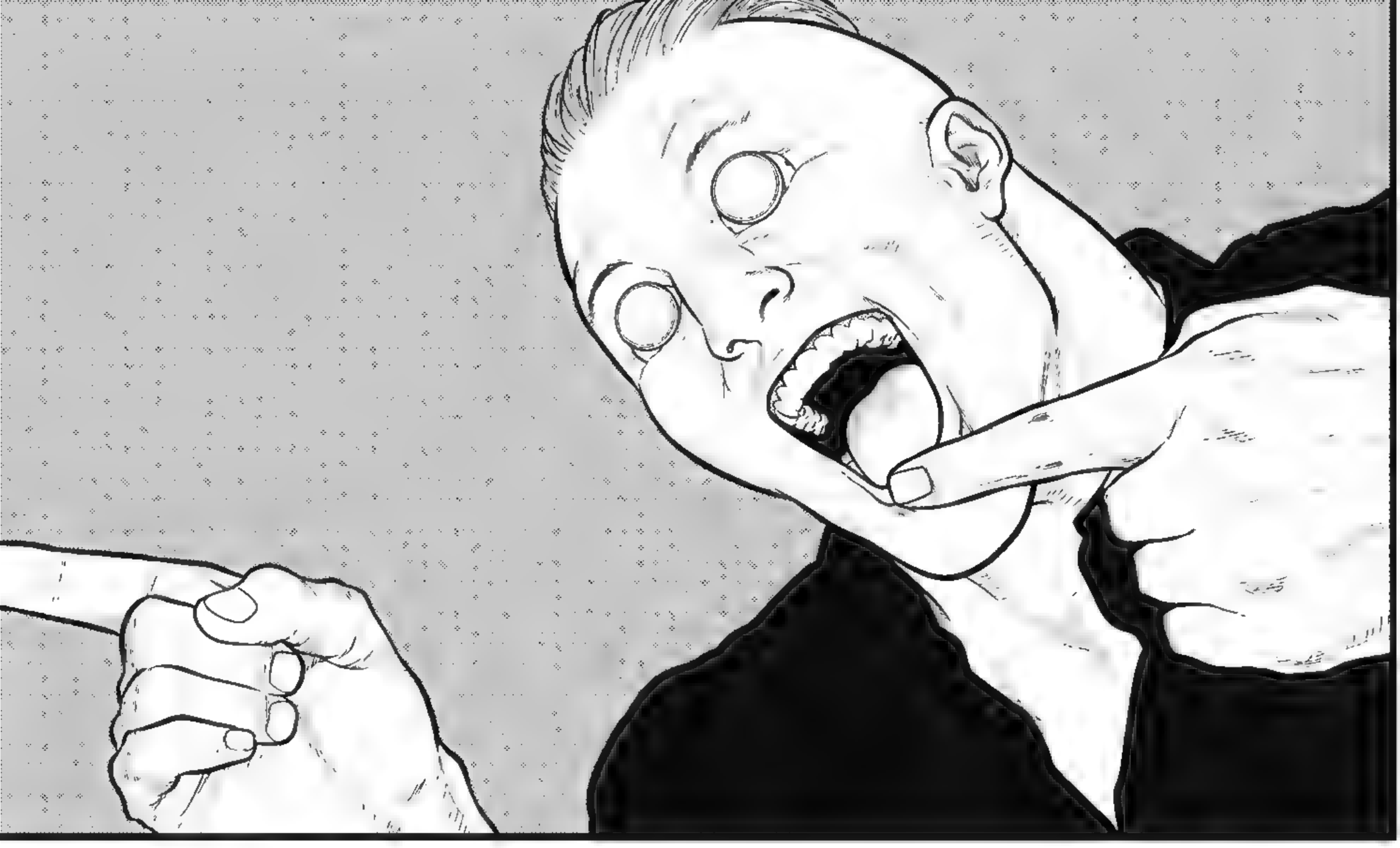
UGH. BACK TO THE SOUTHERN ISLES...
MY BRAIN'S GONNA SHORT OUT FROM THE HEAT.
TSK
TAP
TAP

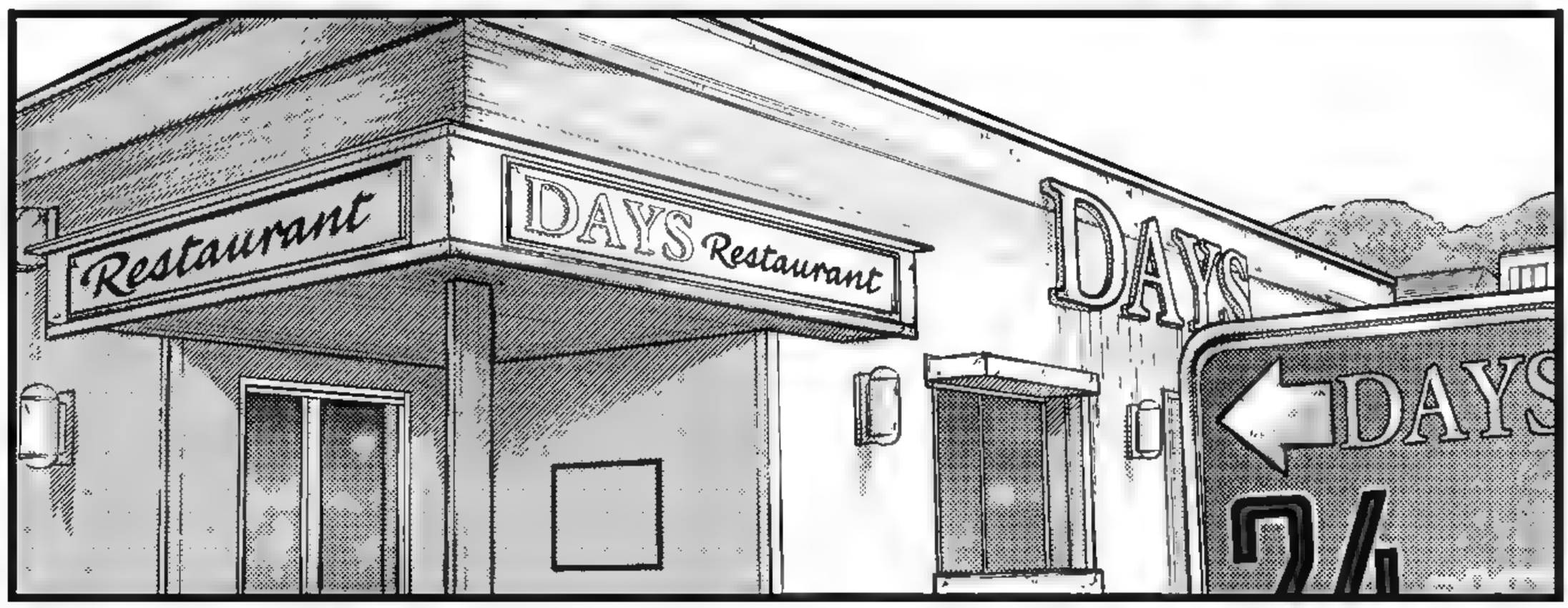
...YOU'LL BE POSING AS A NEW DISCIPLE OF ATERUI. GET INSIDE THE COMMUNITY AND FIND OUT WHAT'S GOING ON.
AND AS FOR YOU, AZUMA...
ERP!
WHAP


AMONG OUR OPERATIVES, YOU HAVE THE LEAST PROSTHETIC ENHANCEMENT, AS WELL AS THE LOWEST AI, SO I DECIDED YOU'RE THE OPTIMAL FIT.

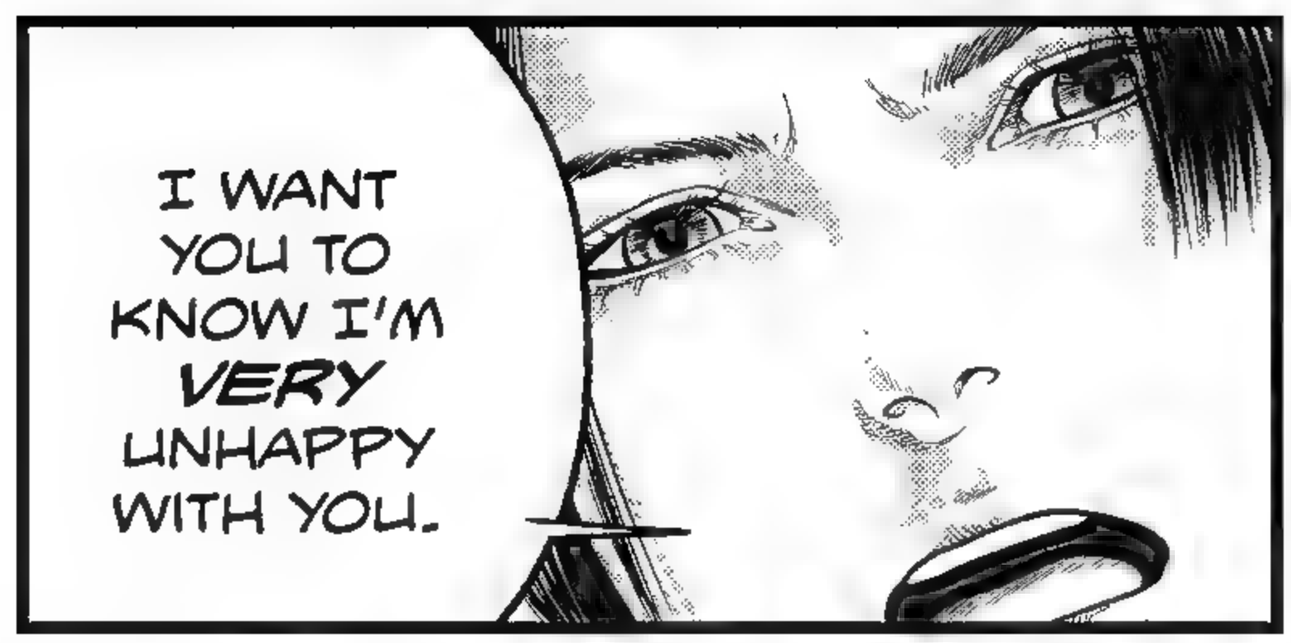
HIS COVER'S BLOWN.
WHAT?! I THOUGHT TOGUSA WAS ON THAT!
WHAP
WHAP
BUT WHY ME?!

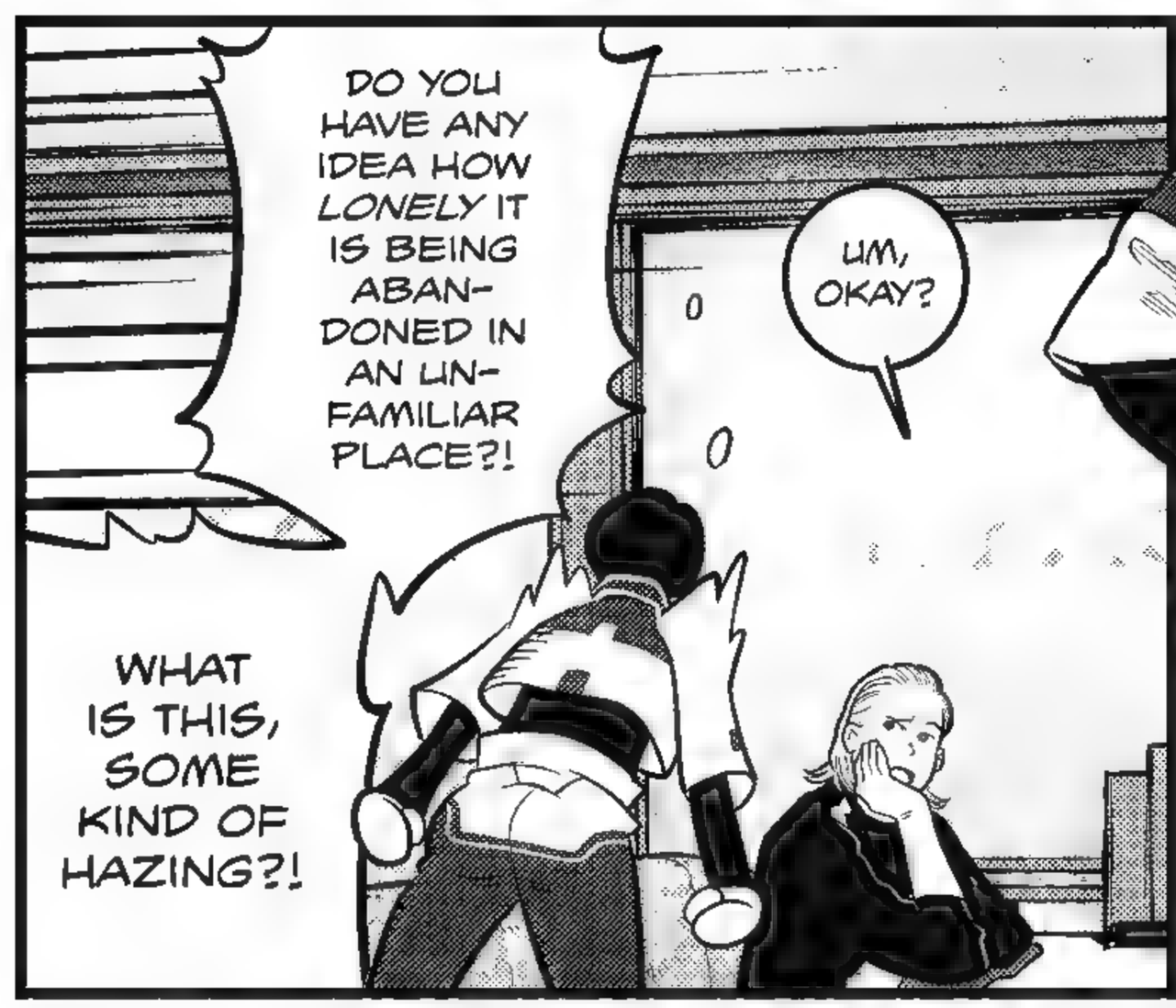
PAT
PAT
...




Restaurant
DAYS Restaurant
DAYS
DAYS
24

WEL-COME!
OH, DON'T GIVE ME THAT. JUST SIT.


I WANT YOU TO KNOW I'M *VERY* UNHAPPY WITH YOU.


DO YOU HAVE ANY IDEA HOW *LONELY* IT IS BEING ABAN-DONED IN AN UN-FAMILIAR PLACE?!
UM, OKAY?
WHAT IS THIS, SOME KIND OF HAZING?!

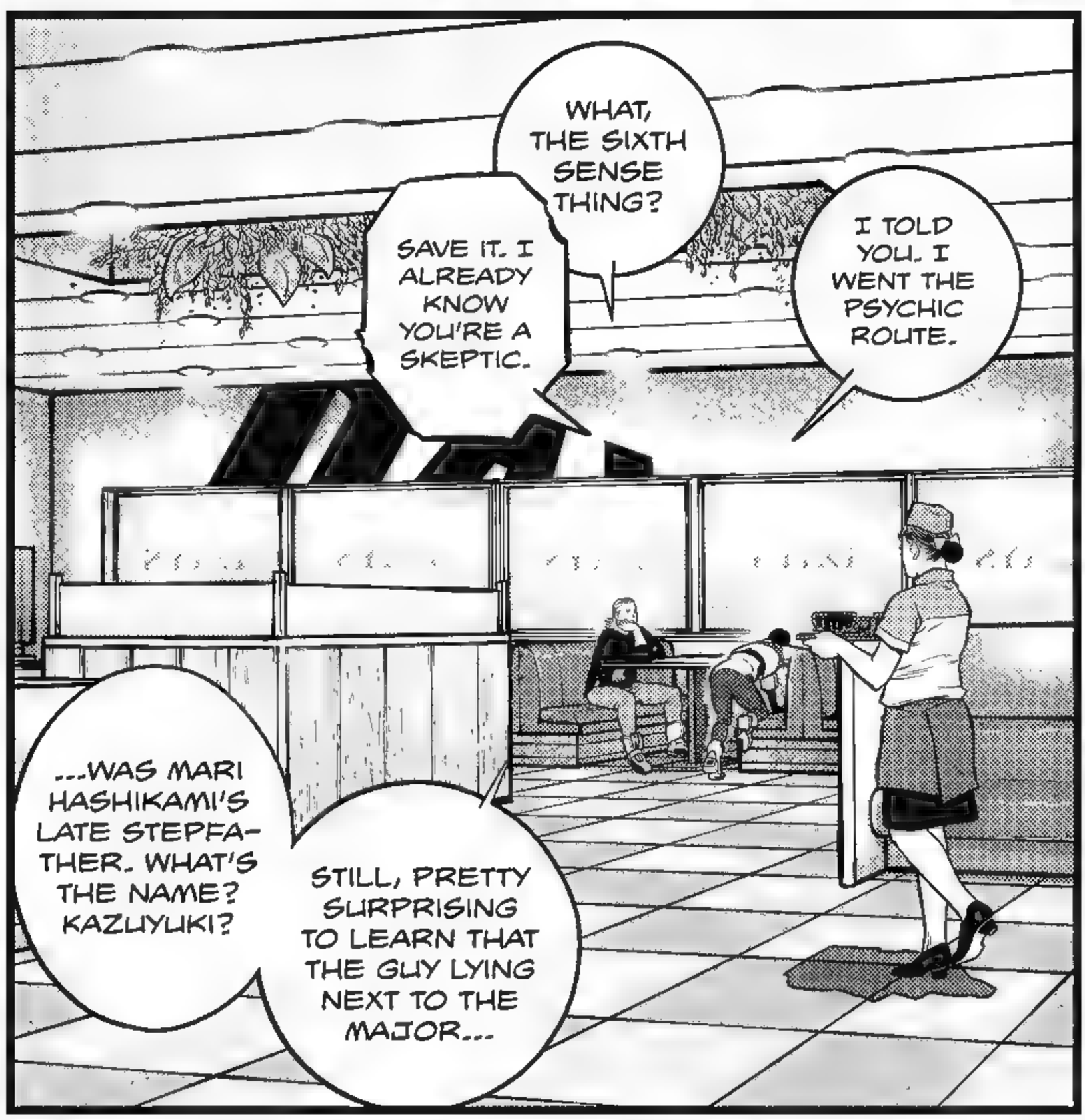
AND I GUESS SOME-TIMES YOU FIND YOURSELF OUT ON A *DATE*?
SLAM
WHO'S THIS MARI CHICK?!

THAT'S THE NATURE OF AN INVES-TIGATION.
SOMETIMES YOU HAVE TO RIDE THE CURRENT AND SEE WHERE IT TAKES YOU.

SHE'S DEAD. BECAUSE I FAILED TO PROTECT HER.

SOMEONE I'M HAVING BATOU AND THE OTHERS LOOK INTO.
!

...


WHAT, THE SIXTH SENSE THING?
SAVE IT. I ALREADY KNOW YOU'RE A SKEPTIC.
I TOLD YOU. I WENT THE PSYCHIC ROUTE.
...WAS MARI HASHIKAMI'S LATE STEPFATHER. WHAT'S THE NAME? KAZUYUKI?
STILL, PRETTY SURPRISING TO LEARN THAT THE GUY LYING NEXT TO THE MAJOR...

NOW, WILL YOU PLEASE SIT?
I WANNA HEAR WHAT YOU TURNED UP.

I STILL COULDN'T MAKE OUT MUCH BECAUSE OF MY *PHYSICAL* CONDITION.

LOTS OF RESIDUAL MEMORIES FLOATING AROUND IN THERE.

YEAH, REAL SHOCK. YOU SAID WE NEEDED MORE INFO, SO I DID ANOTHER READ ON THE GUY.

AND WEIRD AS IT IS, I DIDN'T FIND A SHRED IN THERE ABOUT ANY STEP-DAUGHTER.

I SEE.

BUT I AM CERTAIN OF ONE THING. THIS KAZUYUKI GUY WAS DEEP INTO ATERUI.

YEAH.

NEXT TIME I SEE *HIM*, HE'S GOING STRAIGHT INTO A PEN.

AND I CAN'T STOP THINKING...

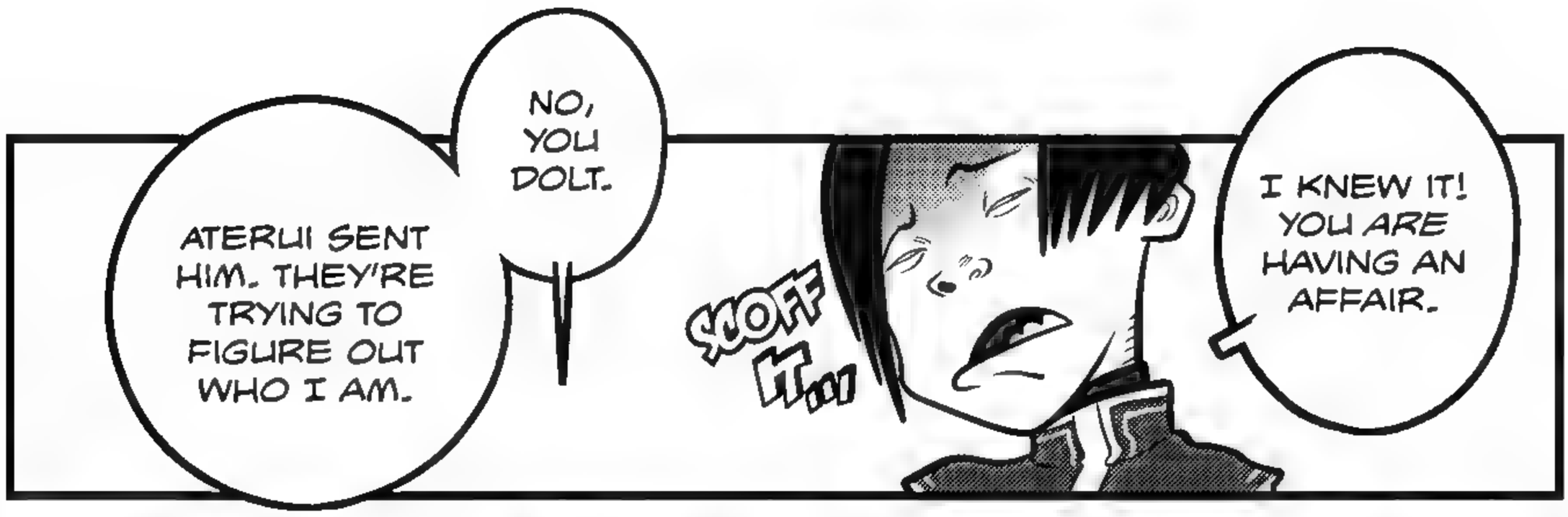
...ABOUT THAT OTHER CREEPY GUY. ALL IN WHITE AND BIG AS A BEAR.

WHAT'S WITH THE SHIFTY EYES? YOU'VE BEEN GLANCING AWAY SINCE I GOT HERE.
HM?

I'M CHECKING THE RE-FLECTION.
OH. YEAH.

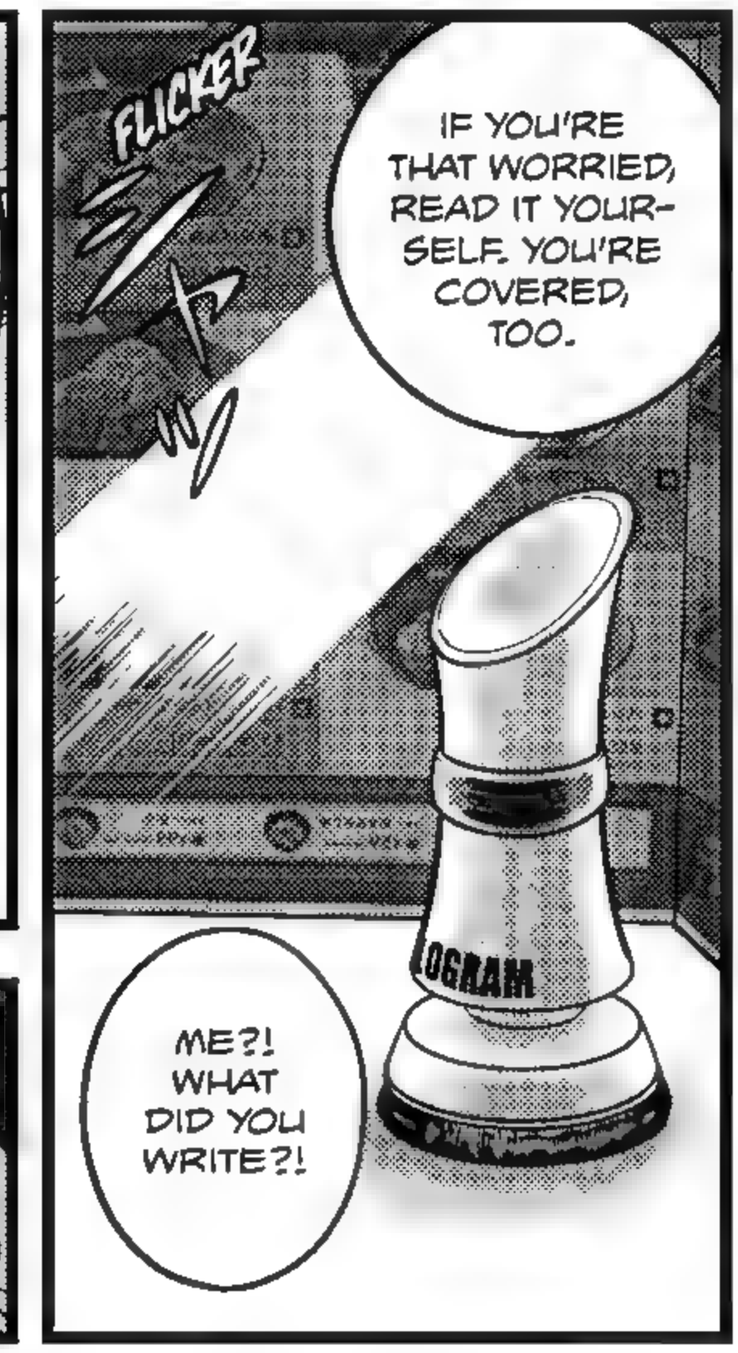
FOR GOD'S SAKE, DON'T LOOK AT HIM!
FWIP
ERP!

GOTTA KEEP TABS ON MY TAIL.
HUH?
YOU MEAN THAT GUY-?


ATERUI SENT HIM. THEY'RE TRYING TO FIGURE OUT WHO I AM.
NO, YOU DOLT.
SLOFF IT...
I KNEW IT! YOU ARE HAVING AN AFFAIR.

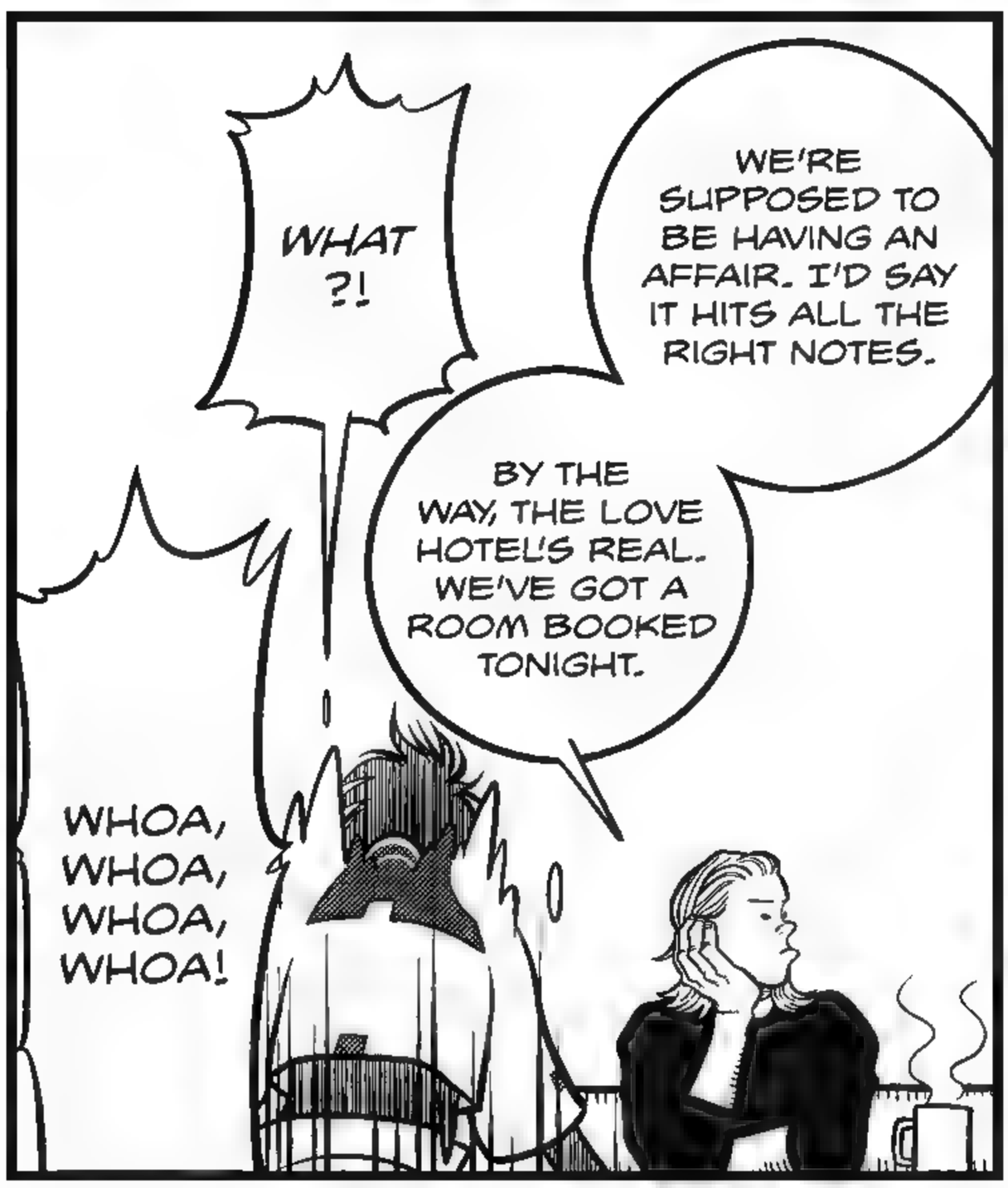
WHISPER
WHAT DOES THAT MEAN ?!
WHISPER
SIIIP
DON'T WORRY. I'VE ALREADY PLANTED A JUICY COVER STORY.
WHISPER
THE CULT?! THEY'RE FOLLOW-ING YOU ?!
WHISPER
I DON'T THINK THIS IS THE TIME TO BE SITTING AROUND SIPPING COFFEE!
WHISPER
WHISPER
Y'KNOW, SOMETHING TO HOLD THEIR ATTENTION.

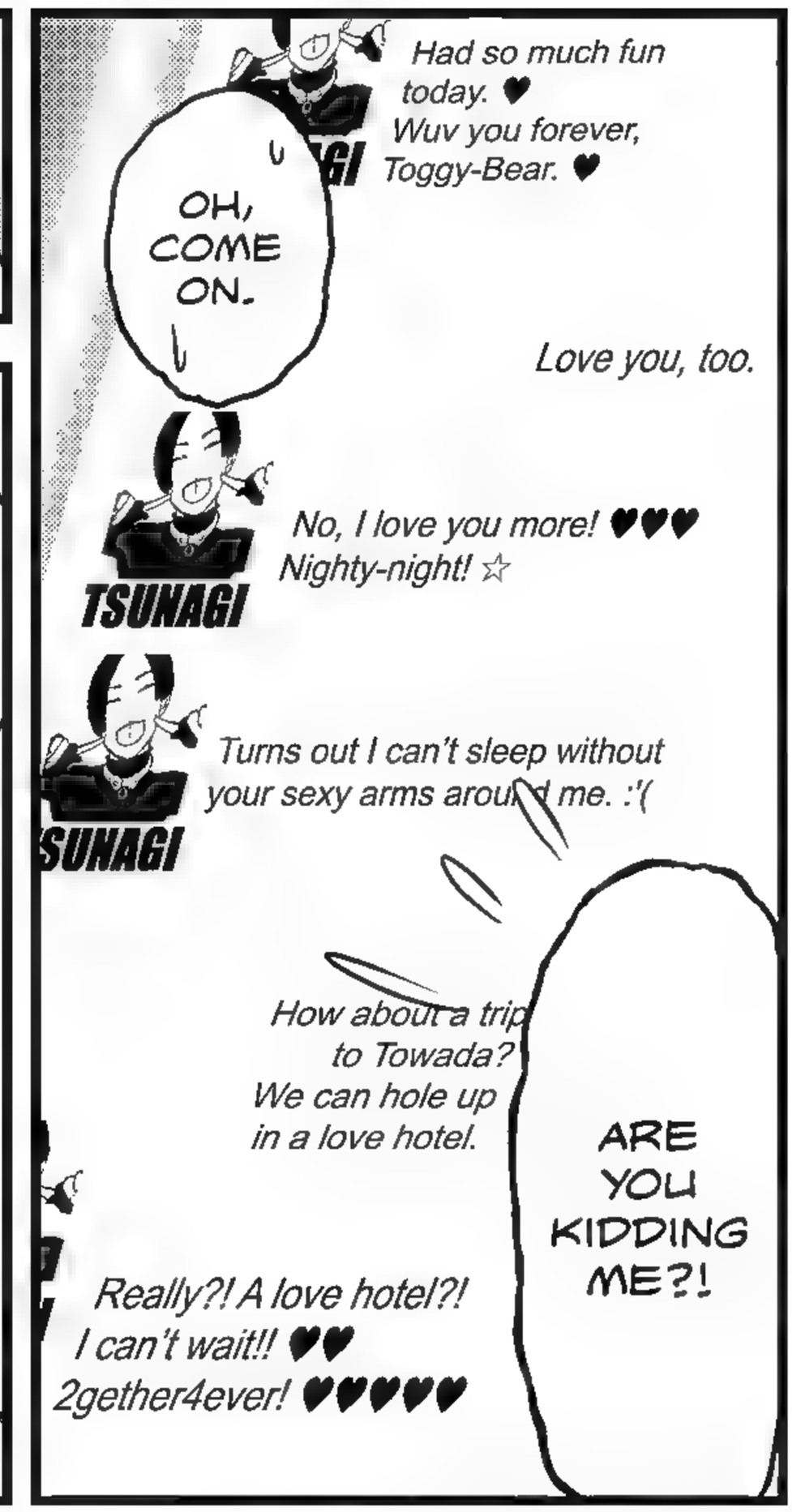
KEEP READING. GETS JUICIER.
BFFT!
LET'S SEE... OCCUPA-TION...
WOW. YOU'VE EVEN GOT FAKE CHATLOGS SET UP.
YOU'RE A MARINE RESEARCH SPECIAL-IST?

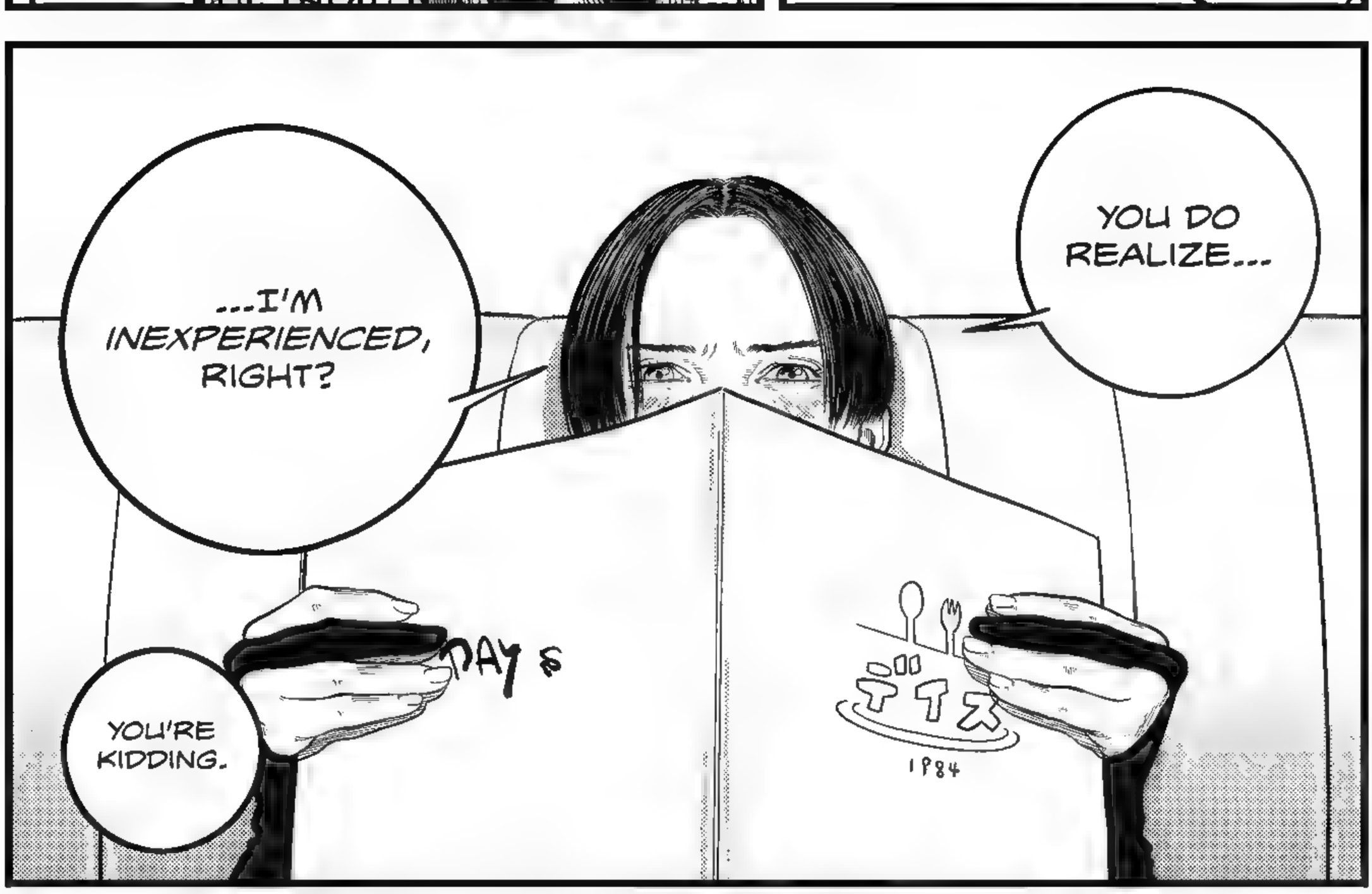

FLICKER
IF YOU'RE THAT WORRIED, READ IT YOUR-SELF. YOU'RE COVERED, TOO.
ME?! WHAT DID YOU WRITE?!

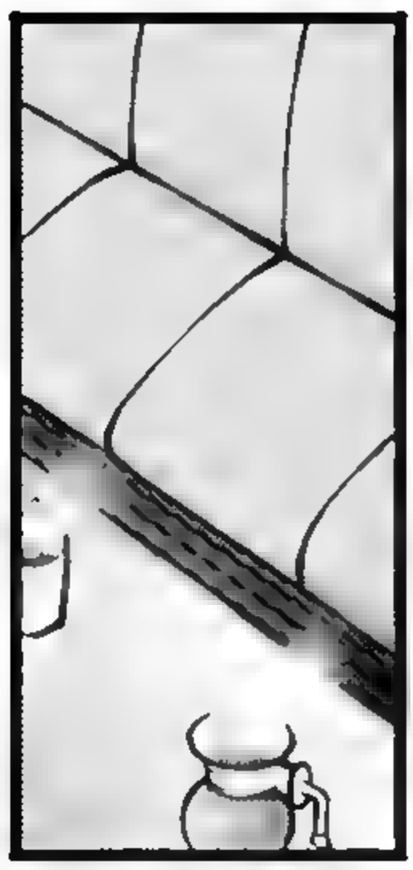
WAIT.

WHAT KIND OF DIRTY, PER-VERTED OLD CREEP...


WHAT ?!
WE'RE SUPPOSED TO BE HAVING AN AFFAIR. I'D SAY IT HITS ALL THE RIGHT NOTES.
BY THE WAY, THE LOVE HOTEL'S REAL. WE'VE GOT A ROOM BOOKED TONIGHT.
WHOA, WHOA, WHOA, WHOA!


Had so much fun today. ♥ Wuv you forever, Toggy-Bear. ♥
OH, COME ON.
Love you, too.
No, I love you more! ♥♥♥ Nighty-night! ☆
TSUNAGI
Turns out I can't sleep without your sexy arms around me. :'(
SUNAGI
How about a trip to Towada? We can hole up in a love hotel.
ARE YOU KIDDING ME?!
Really?! A love hotel?! I can't wait!! ♥♥ 2gether4ever! ♥♥♥♥♥


...I'M INEXPERIENCED, RIGHT?
YOU DO REALIZE...
YOU'RE KIDDING.
1984



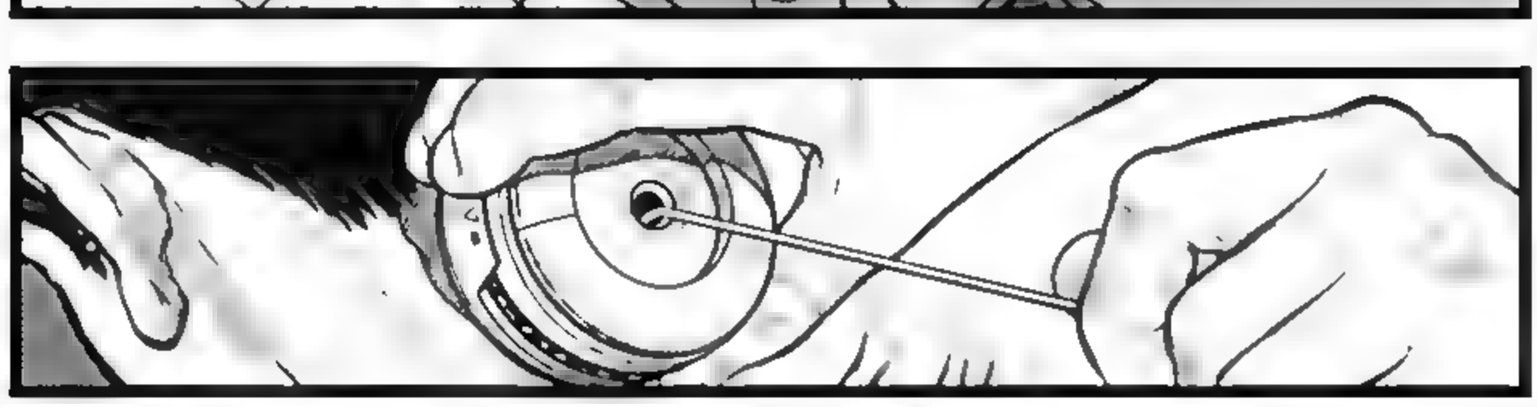
IT'S IMPORTANT THAT WE KEEP OUR BODIES PURE!
LOOK, US PSYCHICS ARE VERY SENSITIVE, OKAY?!
SO THAT'S WHY I...!

NO, UM! WHAT I MEAN IS...!
I'M JUST TRYING TO STICK TO MY MASTER'S TEACH-INGS!
GAAAH!!

HUH?! WHERE'D HE GO?!

CLATTER

SLUMP...
Z''
Z''



BZZRT
BZZRT

SORRY, BUD.
DAZE

PRIVATE INVESTIGA-TOR, HUH?
HMPH.
MENU

CAN'T HAVE YOU INTERRUPTING OUR HUNT FOR THE GREAT WHITE BEAR.
GONNA HAVE TO SEND YOU ON YOUR WAY.
YANK

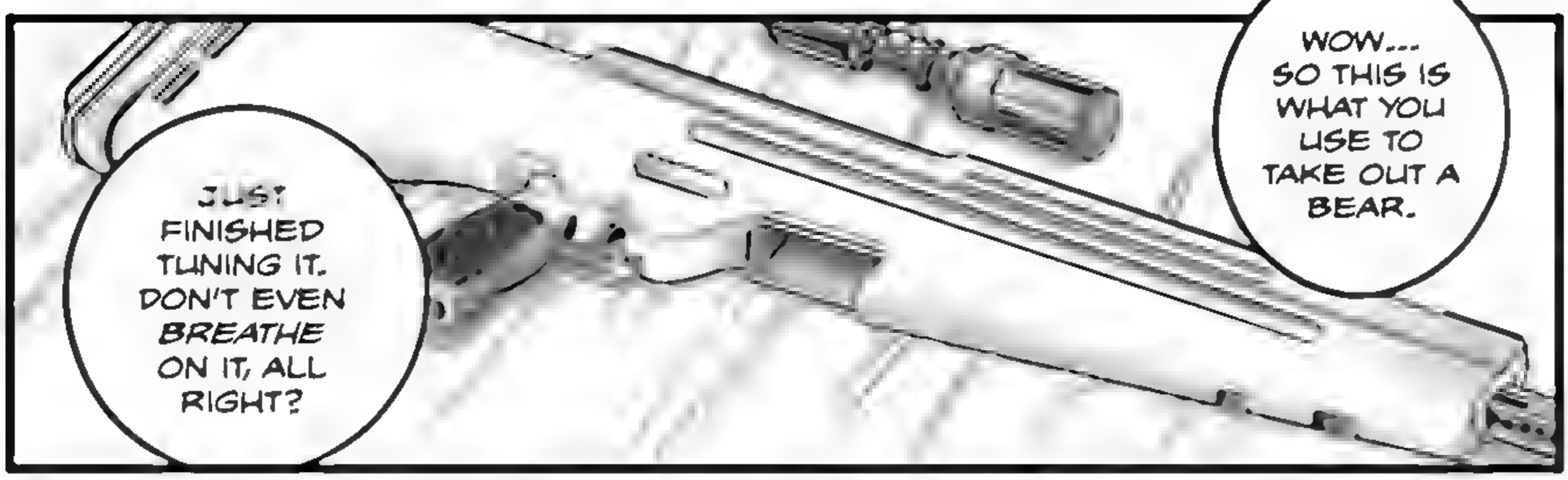
FWAP
I STILL NEED A MOMENT TO PRE-PARE!
OH MY GOD! IT'S FINALLY HAPPEN-ING!!
FWAP
ARE YOU STILL TALKING? WE'RE LEAVING.
...AND WHEN SHE LOST HER VIRGINITY, SHE BE-CAME EVEN MORE ATTUNED.
OF COURSE, THERE WAS THIS ONE GIRL IN THE BUREAU, A COUPLE YEARS OLDER THAN ME...

...MY HEART IS FULL WITH ANTICIPA-TION.
DEAR MASTER, I PRAY THAT YOU MIGHT FORGIVE ME THIS TRANSGRESSION OF OUR IRONCLAD RULE.
HOTEL
みちのくの浪漫
Romance of the Road
KNOW THAT MY HAND IS UPON THIS DOORWAY TO ADULTHOOD OF MY OWN VOLITION, AND THAT AS I TURN THIS HANDLE...

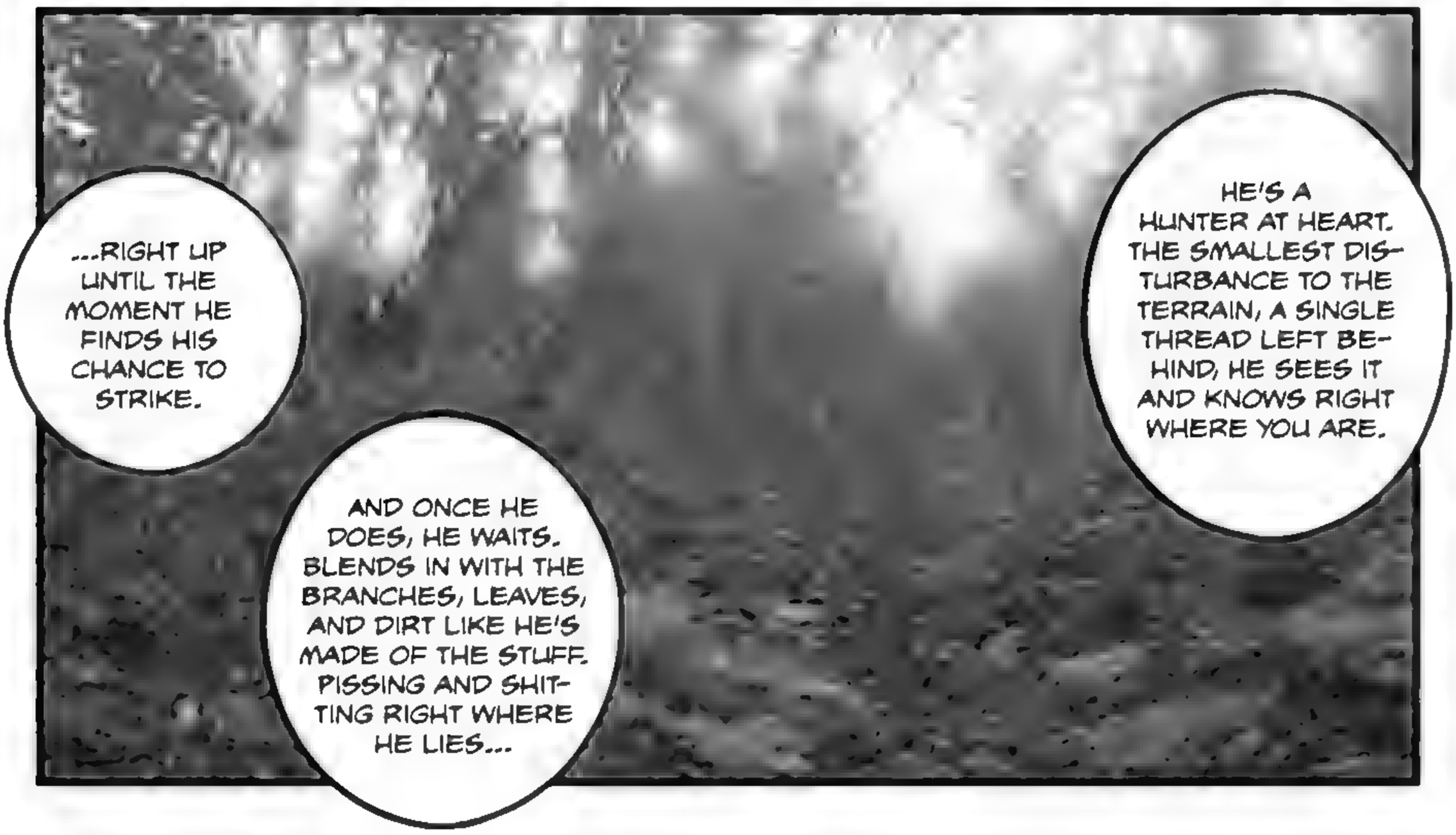
YO.

IT'S FINE. SO WHY THE HOTEL?
SORRY TO KEEP YA.
HOW'S IT GOIN', SAITO?
SKRSHHH!!!

WHAT'RE YOU TALKING ABOUT?!
I'D FINALLY MADE PEACE WITH THIS!
HUH ?!
DANG IT, SAITO! WHAT ARE YOU DOING HERE?!


JUST FINISHED TUNING IT. DON'T EVEN *BREATHE* ON IT, ALL RIGHT?
WOW... SO THIS IS WHAT YOU USE TO TAKE OUT A BEAR.

...THIS MARK OF OURS MADE QUITE THE NAME FOR HIMSELF IN SAKHALIN DURING THE BIG ONE.
AND YOU AREN'T THE FIRST TO MAKE THE ASSO-CIATION. "WHITE BEAR" WAS HIS WARTIME NICK-NAME.
LISTEN, TOGUSA.
IF THE INTEL YOU SENT OVER IS ACCURATE...


...RIGHT UP UNTIL THE MOMENT HE FINDS HIS CHANCE TO STRIKE.
HE'S A HUNTER AT HEART. THE SMALLEST DIS-TURBANCE TO THE TERRAIN, A SINGLE THREAD LEFT BE-HIND, HE SEES IT AND KNOWS RIGHT WHERE YOU ARE.
AND ONCE HE DOES, HE WAITS. BLENDS IN WITH THE BRANCHES, LEAVES, AND DIRT LIKE HE'S MADE OF THE STUFF. PISSING AND SHIT-TING RIGHT WHERE HE LIES...

THAT'S THE MATAGI WAY.

THEY LEARN THE LAY OF THE LAND...

SPLISH

SPLISH

...LIVE AS ONE WITH THE MOUNTAIN, AND PAY THEIR RESPECTS TO THEIR PREY BEFORE CLAIMING ITS LIFE.

A HUNTING CULTURE. BEEN AROUND FOR CENTU-RIES.

MATAGI? WHAT'S THAT?

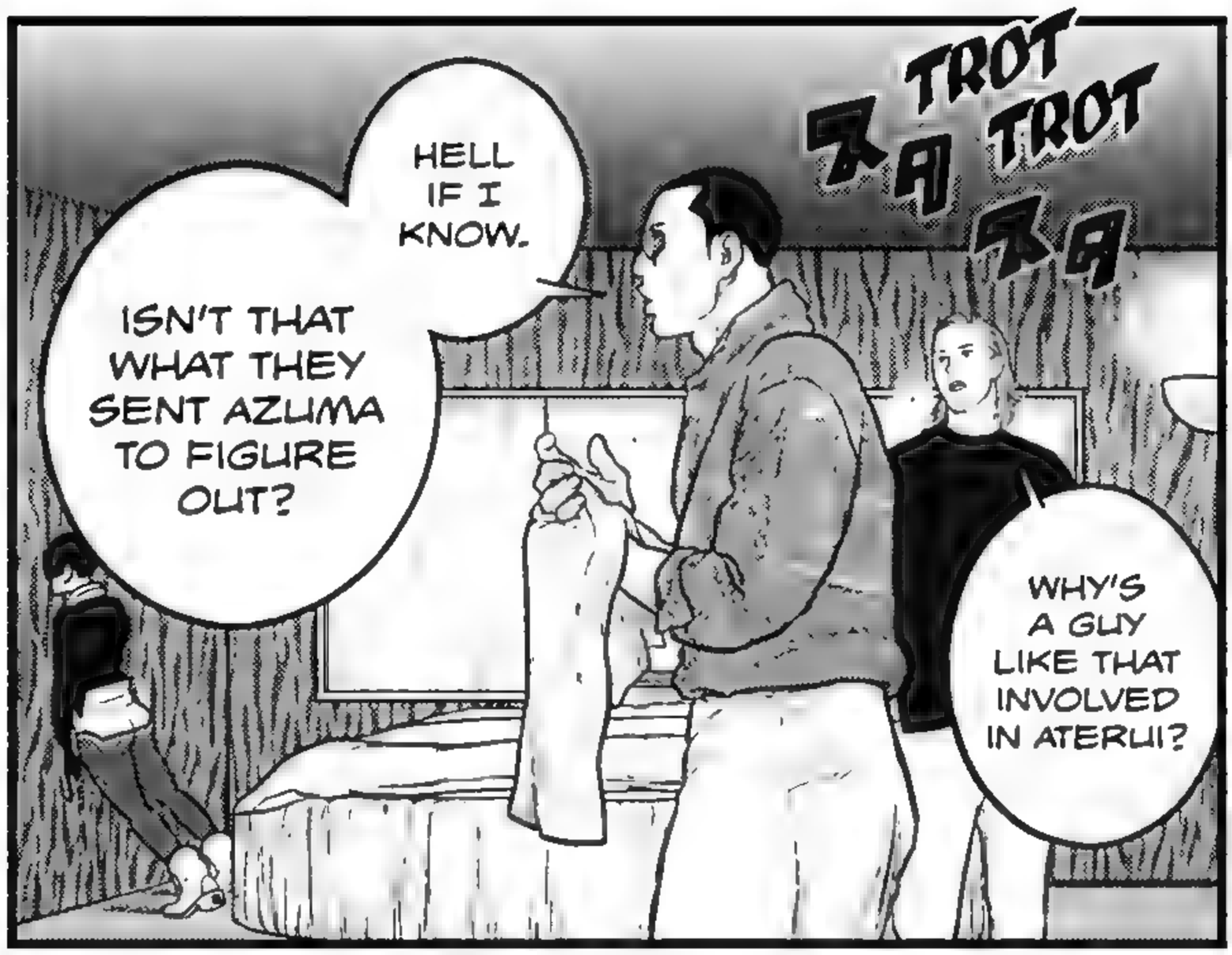
THEY GO BY A LOT OF NAMES.

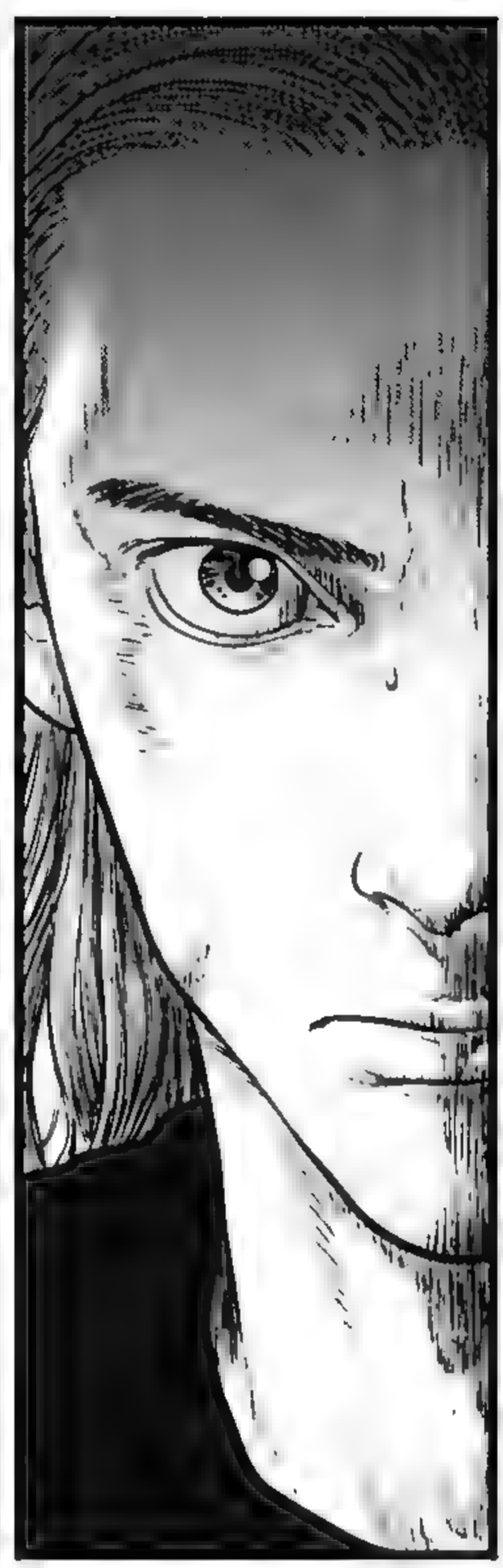
SEASONED WARRIORS ON THE BATTLE-FIELD OF THE MIND.

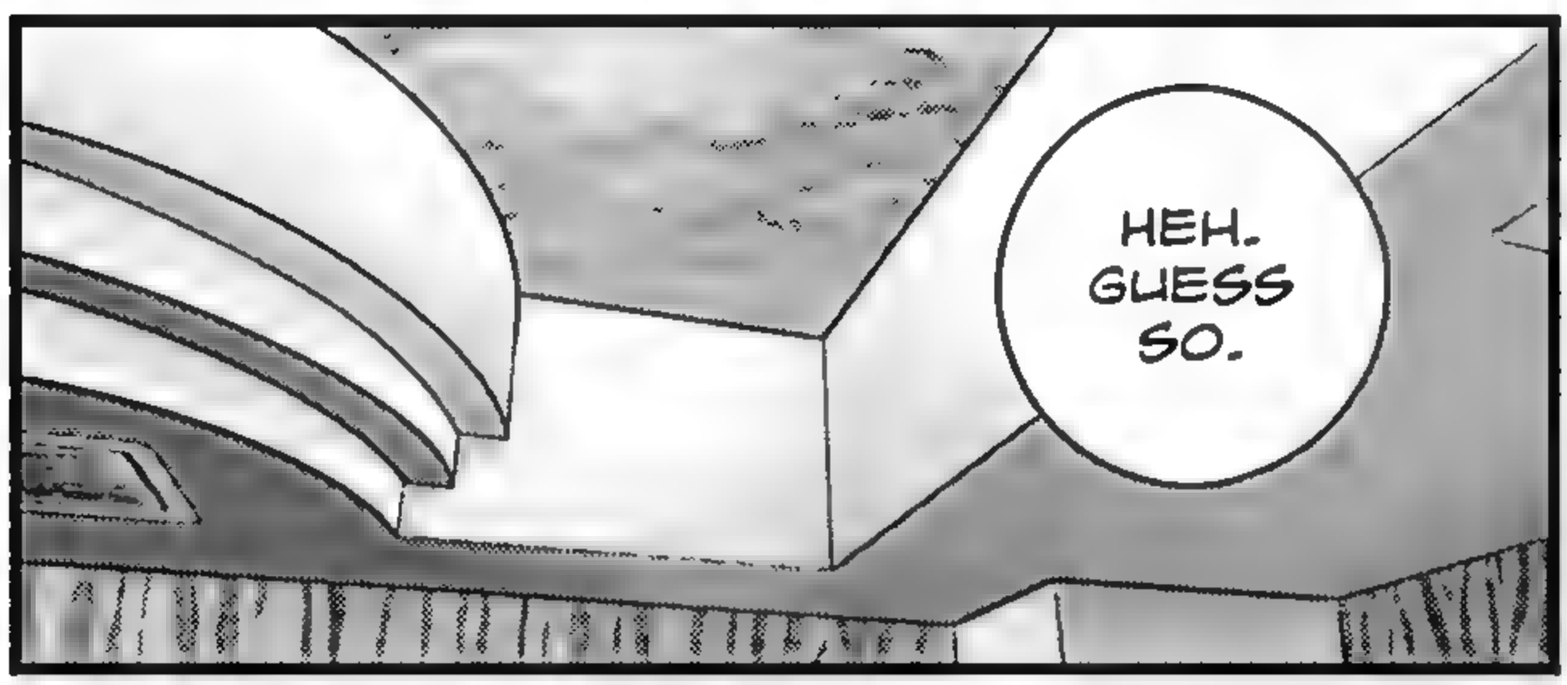
THE HUNTS-MEN OF THE MOUNTAINS. MASTERS OF THE KILL ZONE.

...THEY'RE LIVING, BREATHING WEAPONS, BORN TO HUNT.

BUT WHATEVER YOU WANNA CALL 'EM...


TROT
TROT
HELL IF I KNOW.
ISN'T THAT WHAT THEY SENT AZUMA TO FIGURE OUT?
WHY'S A GUY LIKE THAT INVOLVED IN ATERUI?




HEH. GUESS SO.

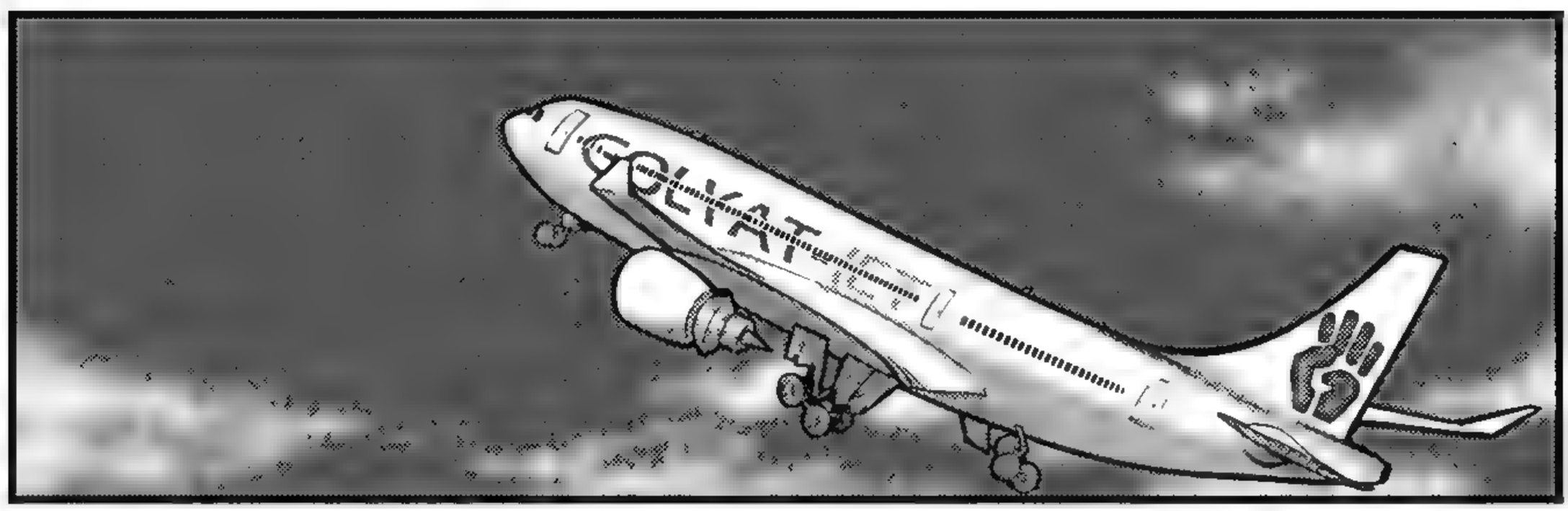
MAY THY SOUL BE

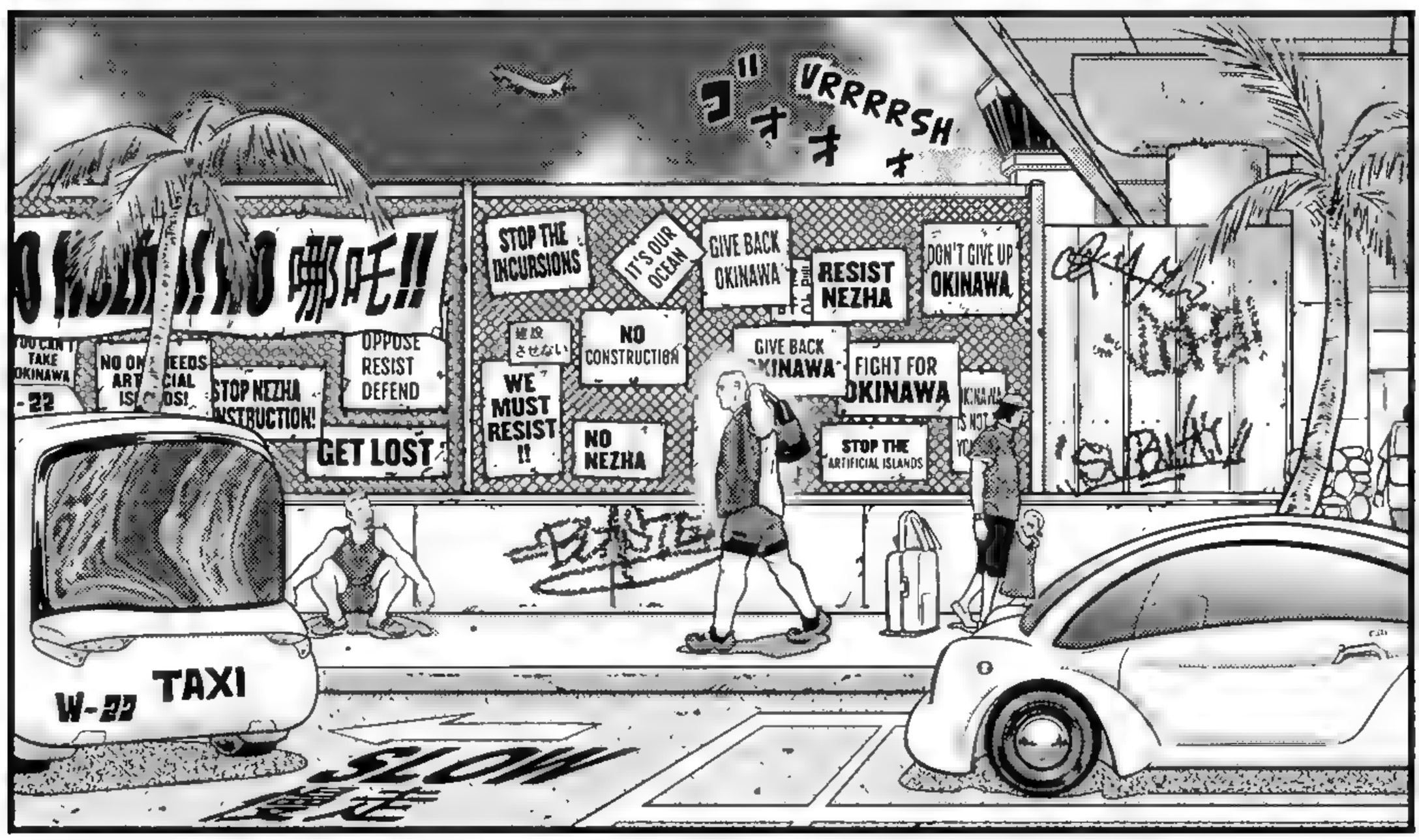
DIIIING

RIGHT AWAY, SIR!
GOOD. NOW BACK TO IT.
BOW
BOW
THANK YOU, SIR!
YES, SIR!
WE LABOR DAY AND NIGHT HERE. THAT IS THE SPIRIT OF TRUE BELIEF.
PUT YOUR HEART INTO IT!
WHAP
DIIIING
YES, SIR!
LOUDER!
PURE!
MAY THY SOUL BE PURE!
OKINAWA AIRPORT
EXIT

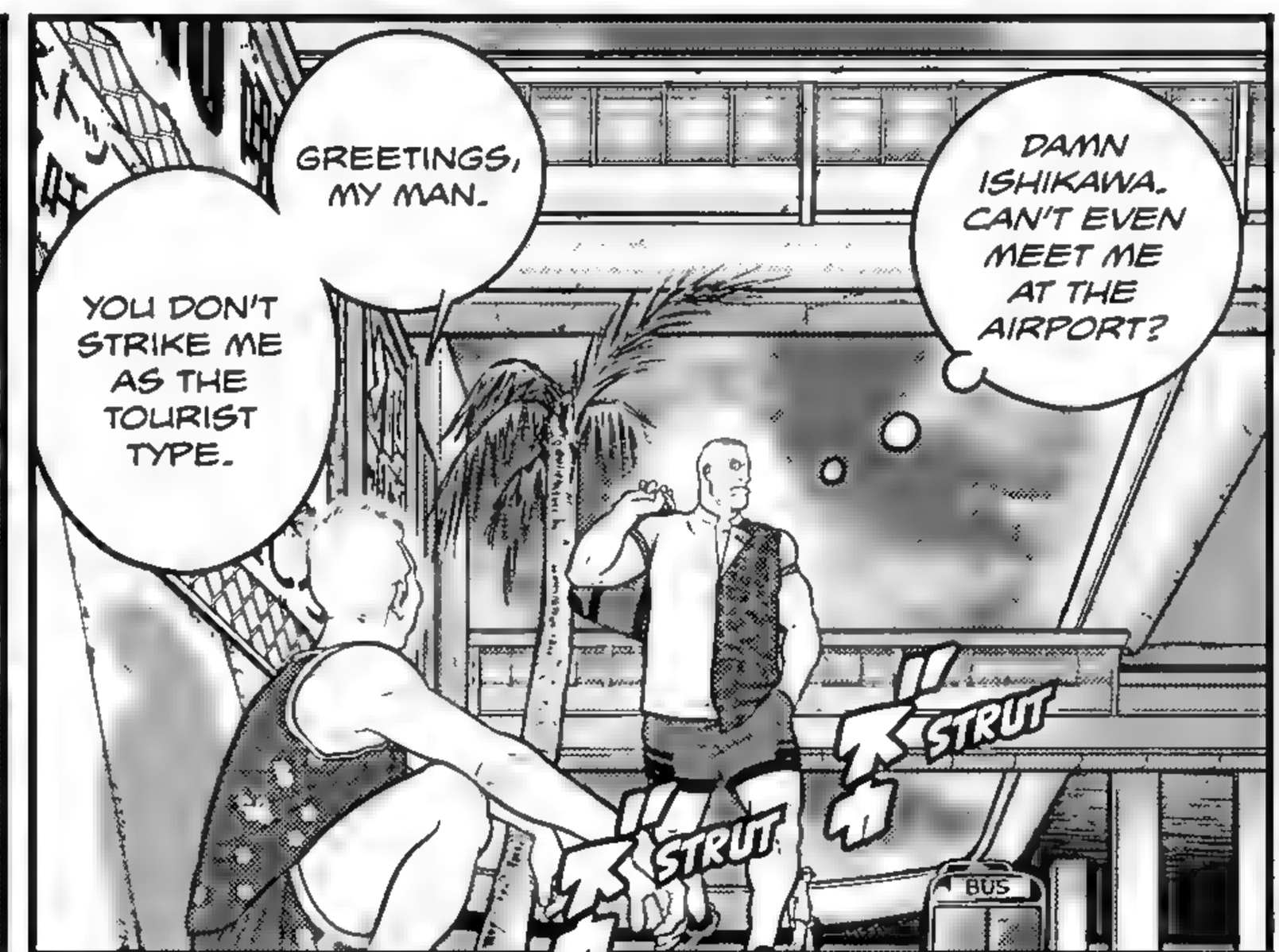
04

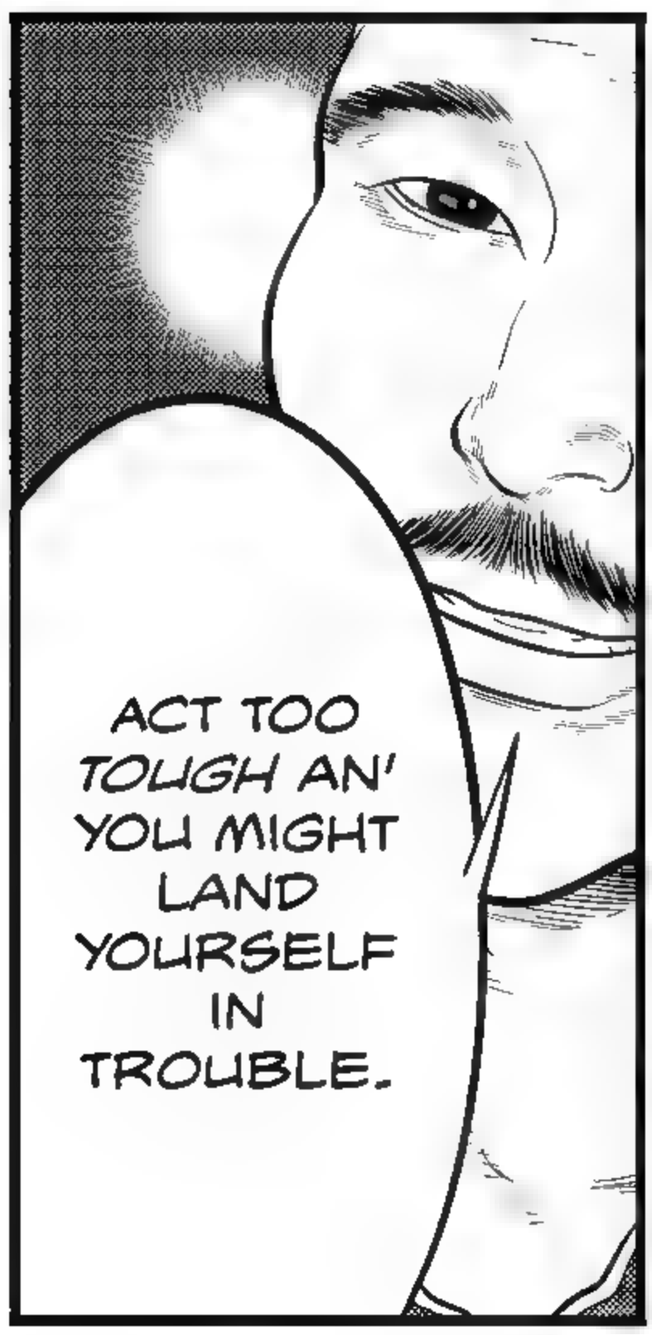
STORMING


GOLIAT


ゴオオオ
URRRRSH
STOP THE INCURSIONS
IT'S OUR OCEAN
GIVE BACK OKINAWA
RESIST NEZHA
DON'T GIVE UP OKINAWA
NO CONSTRUCTION
WE MUST RESIST !!
NO NEZHA
GIVE BACK OKINAWA
FIGHT FOR OKINAWA
STOP THE ARTIFICIAL ISLANDS
OPPOSE RESIST DEFEND
GET LOST
W-22 TAXI
SLOW

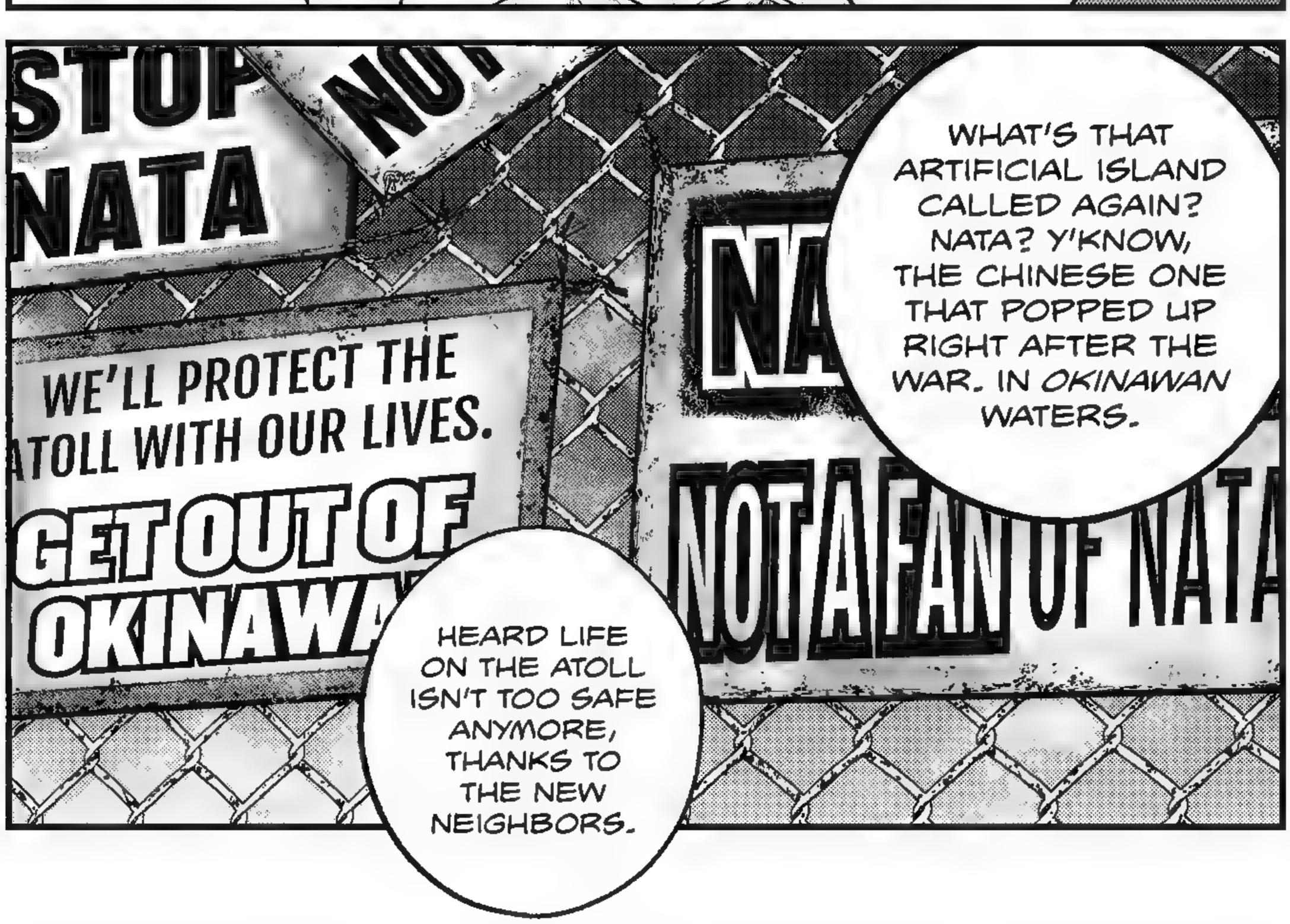
MUST BE HERE LOOKIN' FOR WORK.
...


GREETINGS, MY MAN.
YOU DON'T STRIKE ME AS THE TOURIST TYPE.
DAMN ISHIKAWA. CAN'T EVEN MEET ME AT THE AIRPORT?
STRUT
STRUT
BUS


ACT TOO TOUGH AN' YOU MIGHT LAND YOURSELF IN TROUBLE.

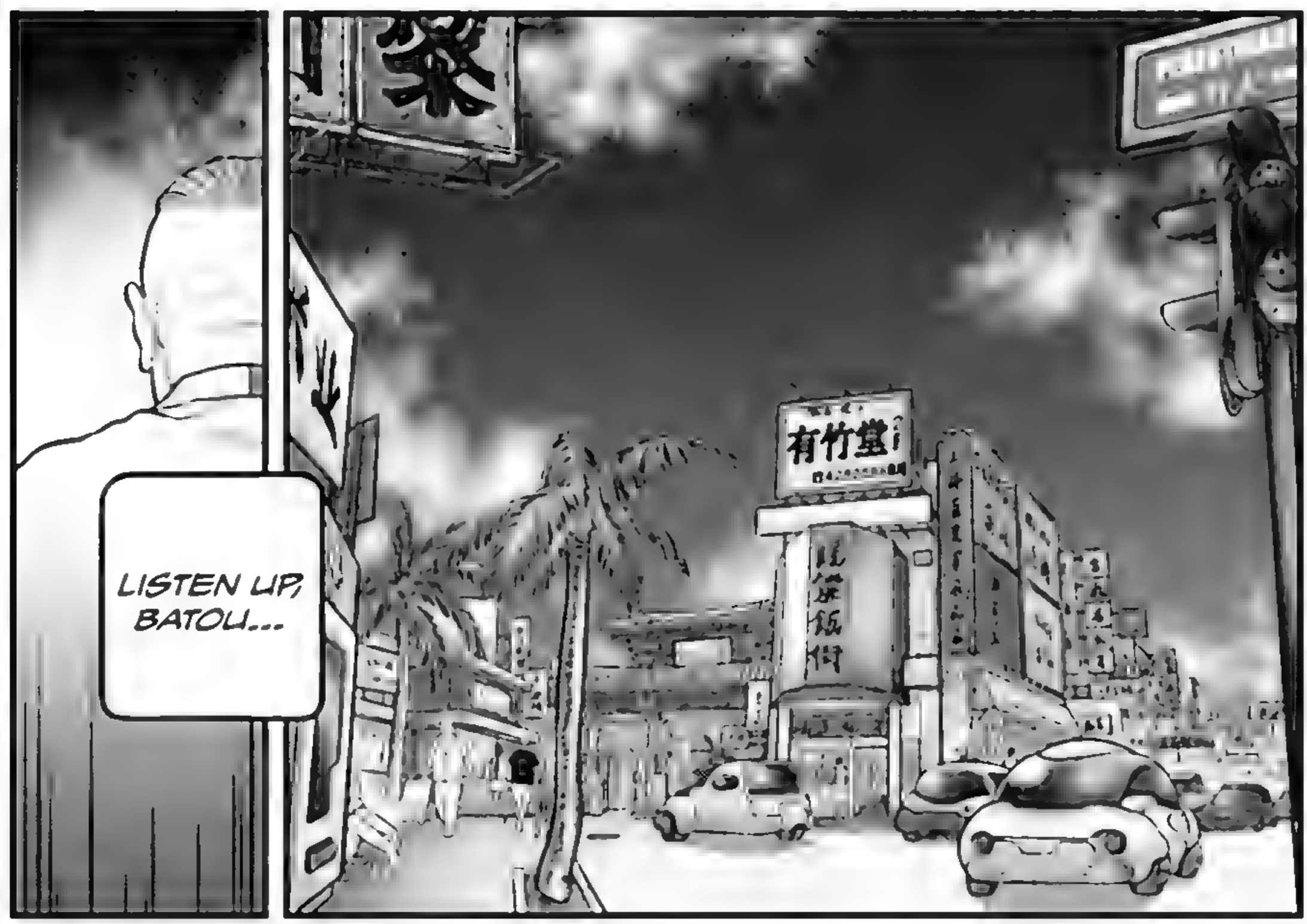
THE ISLANDS AIN'T LIKE THEY USED TO BE.
JUST WATCH YOUR STEP, YEAH?

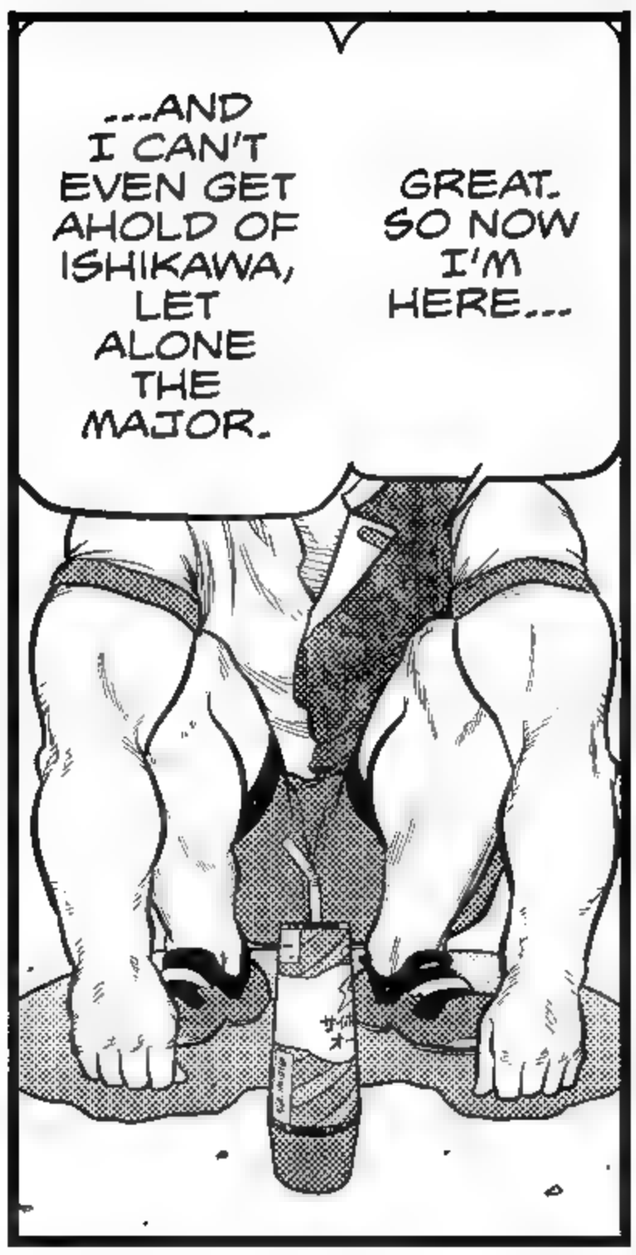
TIMES A-CHANGIN', HUH? ANYTHING TO DO WITH THESE BEAT-UP PROTEST SIGNS?


STOP
NATA
WE'LL PROTECT THE ATOLL WITH OUR LIVES.
GET OUT OF OKINAWA
NOT A FAN OF NATA
WHAT'S THAT ARTIFICIAL ISLAND CALLED AGAIN? NATA? Y'KNOW, THE CHINESE ONE THAT POPPED UP RIGHT AFTER THE WAR. IN *OKINAWAN* WATERS.
HEARD LIFE ON THE ATOLL ISN'T TOO SAFE ANYMORE, THANKS TO THE NEW NEIGHBORS.

ET IT GO!!
HEH...!
OKINAWAN WATERS, HM? ...WELL, JUST BE CARE-FUL.
DON'T END UP ON THE WRONG SIDE, YEAH?
SKRP

コザ新国際通り
Koza-shin-kokusai-dori

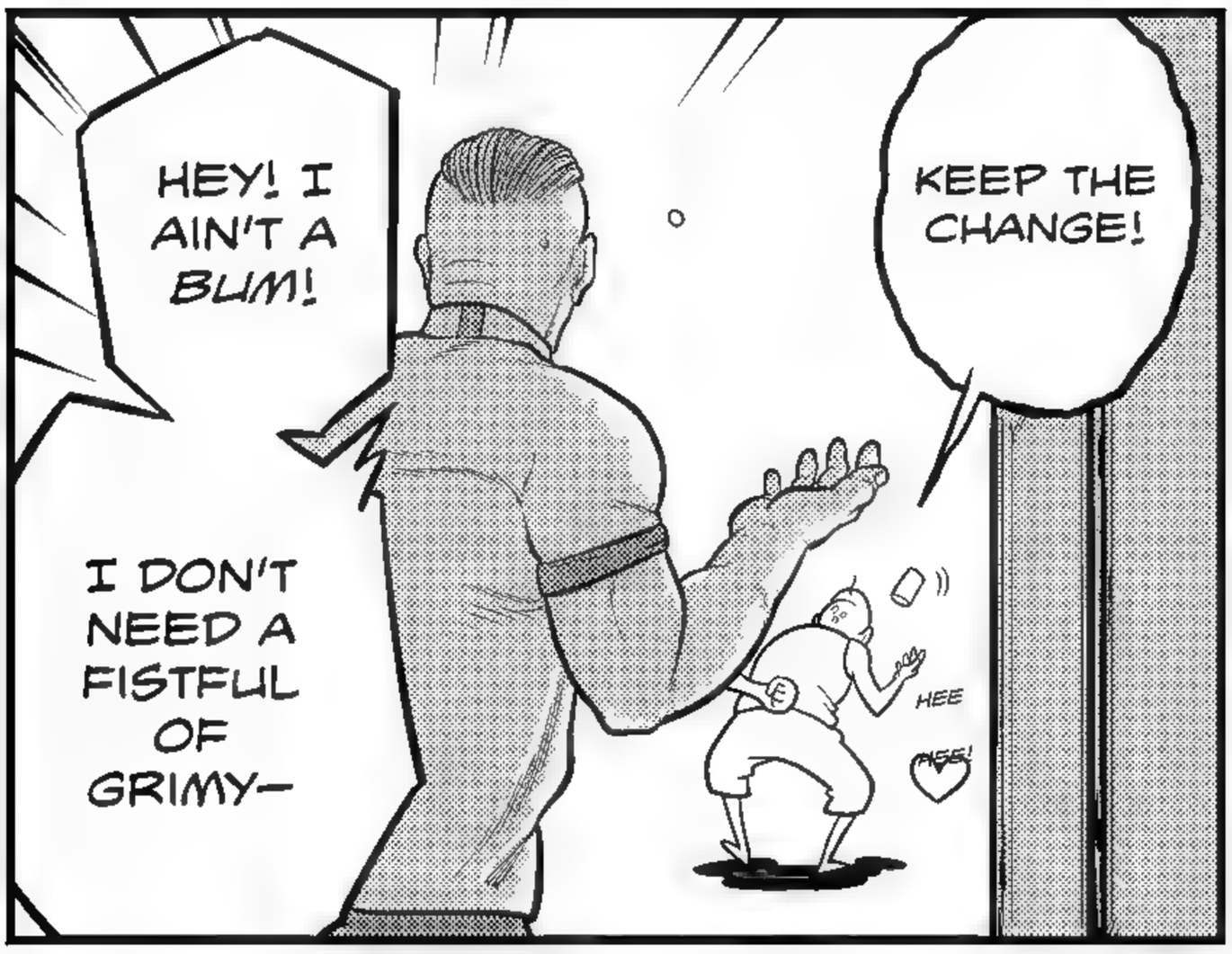

有竹堂
LISTEN UP, BATOU...

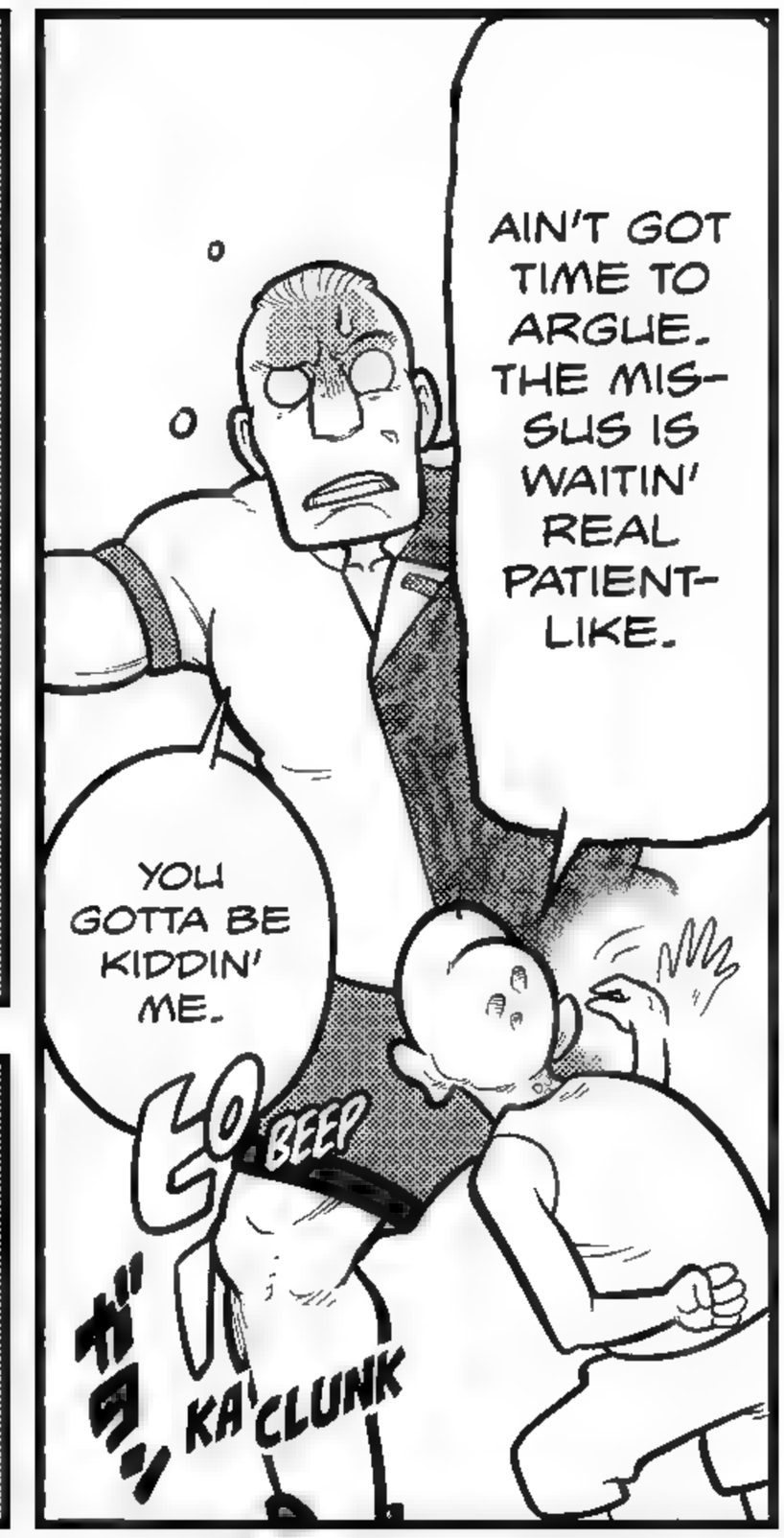

...AND I CAN'T EVEN GET AHOLD OF ISHIKAWA, LET ALONE THE MAJOR.
GREAT. SO NOW I'M HERE...

ISHIKAWA'S ALREADY ON-SITE. RENDEZVOUS AND FIND OUT WHAT THOSE SHIPS ARE UP TO.
SUSPICIOUS VESSELS HAVE BEEN SIGHTED IN A REGION OF HIGHLY POLLUTED OKINAWAN WATERS.
AND WE'VE GOT TRACES SUGGESTING THE MAJOR'S BEEN THERE.

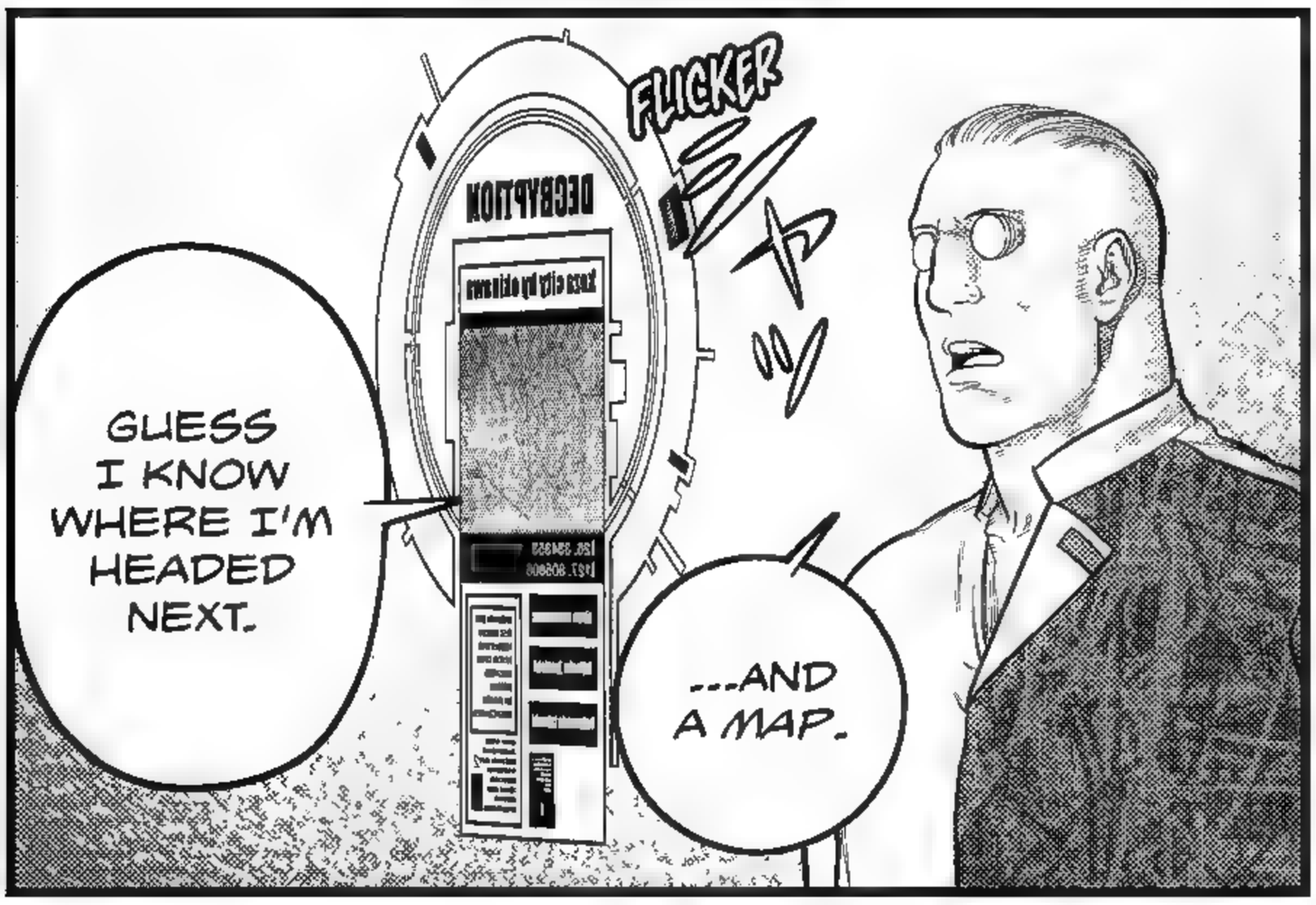
COULD YA LEND ME A HAND, SONNY?
HM?
TOTTER
TEETER
SHRRRP
CYBORG OIL
JUST PERFECT.

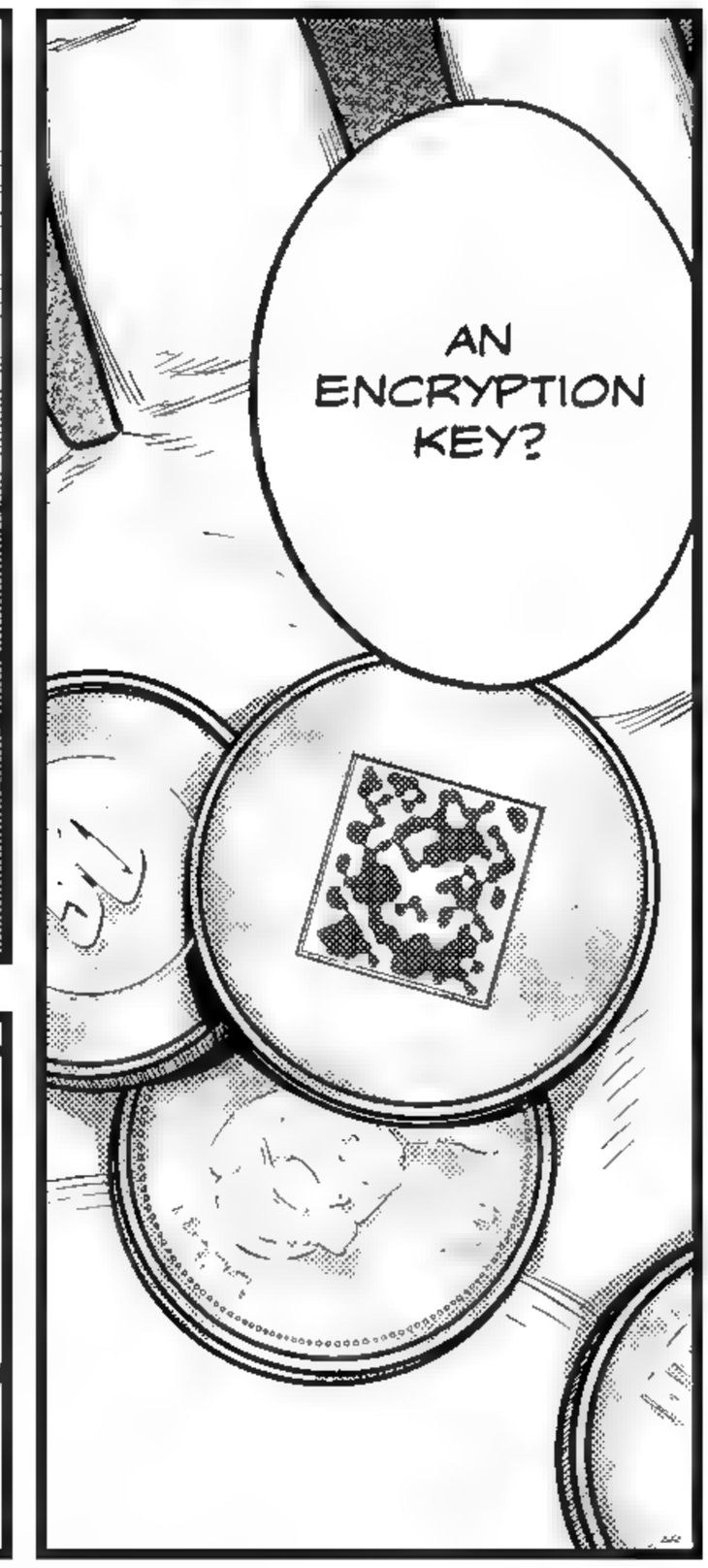
15
POWER UP
EXTREMELY POTENT
ROYAL VITAMINS
HABUADE
ASIAN REMEDY
WITH PURE HABU SNAKE EXTRAC
PRETTY SURE THAT STUFF UP THERE'S FOR BEDROOM NEEDS, Y'KNOW?
AUTO MART
24 HOUR
AH, GEEZ. MAYBE THERE'S SOME OTHER ONE YOU WANT?
SURE, I GOTCHA. WHICH DRINK YA AFTER?
NEED HELP WORKIN' THE MA-CHINE?
THAT ONE FOR CYBORGS. UP AT THE TOP.


HEY! I AIN'T A BUM!
I DON'T NEED A FISTFUL OF GRIMY–
KEEP THE CHANGE!
HEE
HEE!


AIN'T GOT TIME TO ARGUE. THE MIS-SUS IS WAITIN' REAL PATIENT-LIKE.
YOU GOTTA BE KIDDIN' ME.
BEEP
KA'CLUNK

!


FLICKER
DECRYPTION
GUESS I KNOW WHERE I'M HEADED NEXT.
...AND A MAP.


AN ENCRYPTION KEY?

W-WHERE AM I?! HOW'D I GET OUT HERE?!
SHOOOMP
HUH ?!
?!
RIGHT. THIS HAS GOT ISHIKAWA WRITTEN ALL OVER IT.

沖縄銀行
喜多郎肉
金旺角
屋

THWOK
GOIN' A LITTLE OVER-BOARD WITH THE PRE-CAUTIONS, THOUGH.

WHY'S HE WANT TO MEET HERE?
コザ市職業安定所
KOZA CITY JOB SERVICES CENTER
HM?

JOBS ①
THIS HIS WAY OF TELLIN' ME TO FIND A NEW CAREER?
HELP DESK
GLANCE
GLANCE
SPRING
SPRING

FELLA, I CAN GET YOU 30 FOR ONLY *THREE DAYS A WEEK!*

ROOM AND BOARD INCLUDED! TOTALLY PRIVATE ACCOMMO-DATIONS!

VWAP

HEY THERE, BIG BOY. *LOVE* THE HARDWARE. GOT SOME DEEP-SEA LABOR...

...YOU'D BE *PERFECT* FOR. BASE IS FIFTY, PLUS COMMISSION. WHADDYA SAY? ♡

WHUH ?!

MY GUY CAN EVEN GET YOU LI-CENSED—

DON'T BE LIKE THAT! IT NEVER HURTS TO *TALK*! ♡

SORRY. JUST HERE TO SEE A FRIEND.

YOU AND YOUR BOLT-ON TITS CAN GET LOST!

SINK YER TEETH INTO SOMEONE ELSE, YA BALD CHIP-MUNK!

I SAW HIM FIRST!!

GREETINGS, MY MAN.

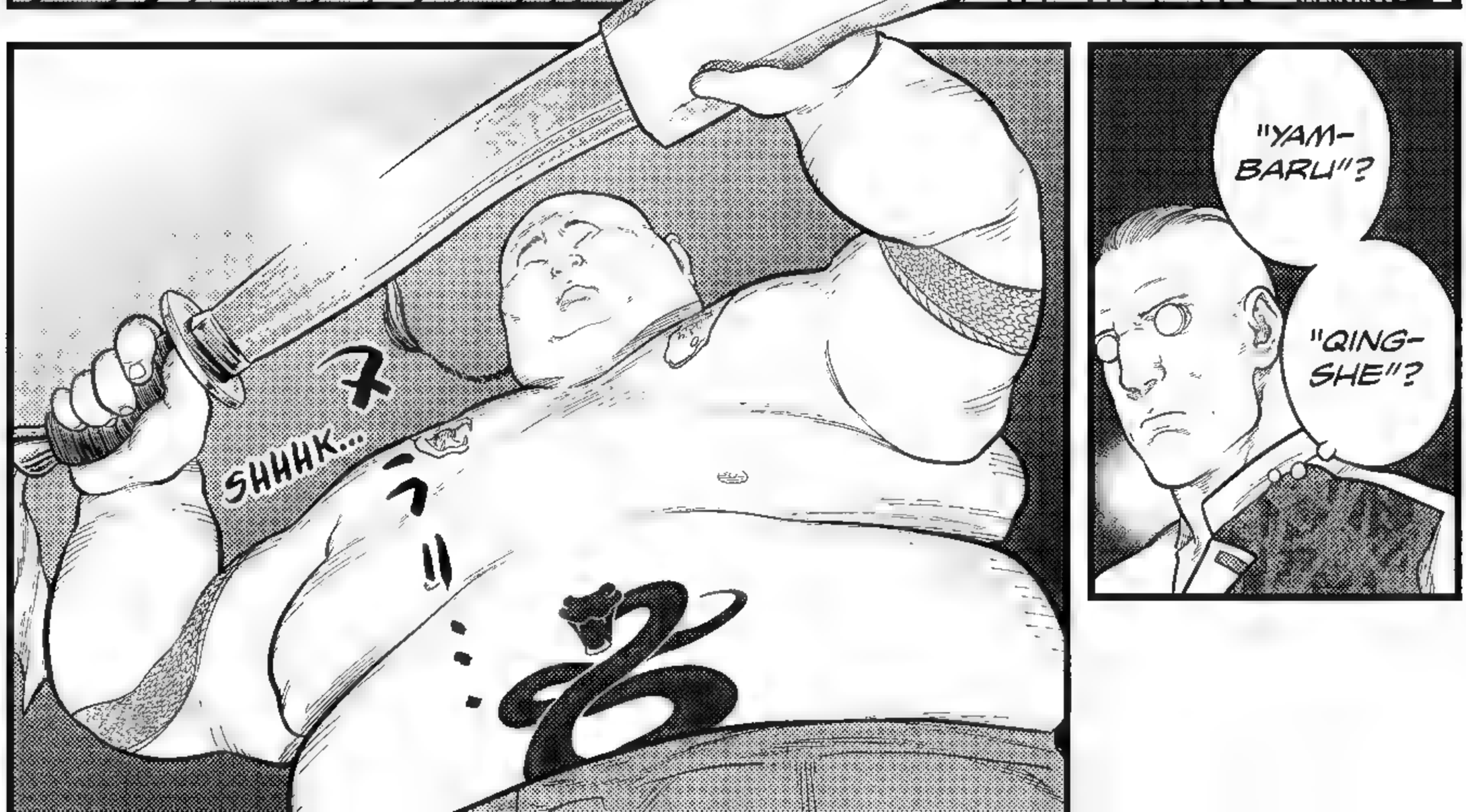
BUT IT SEEMS LIKE YOU STILL ENDED UP ON THE WRONG SIDE.
THOUGHT I WARNED YOU?

HELP DESK
...SO YOU'RE WITH THE YAMBARU?!
Y-YOU DIDN'T SAY YOU'RE WITH THE QINGSHE!
THE HELL'S THAT MEAN?

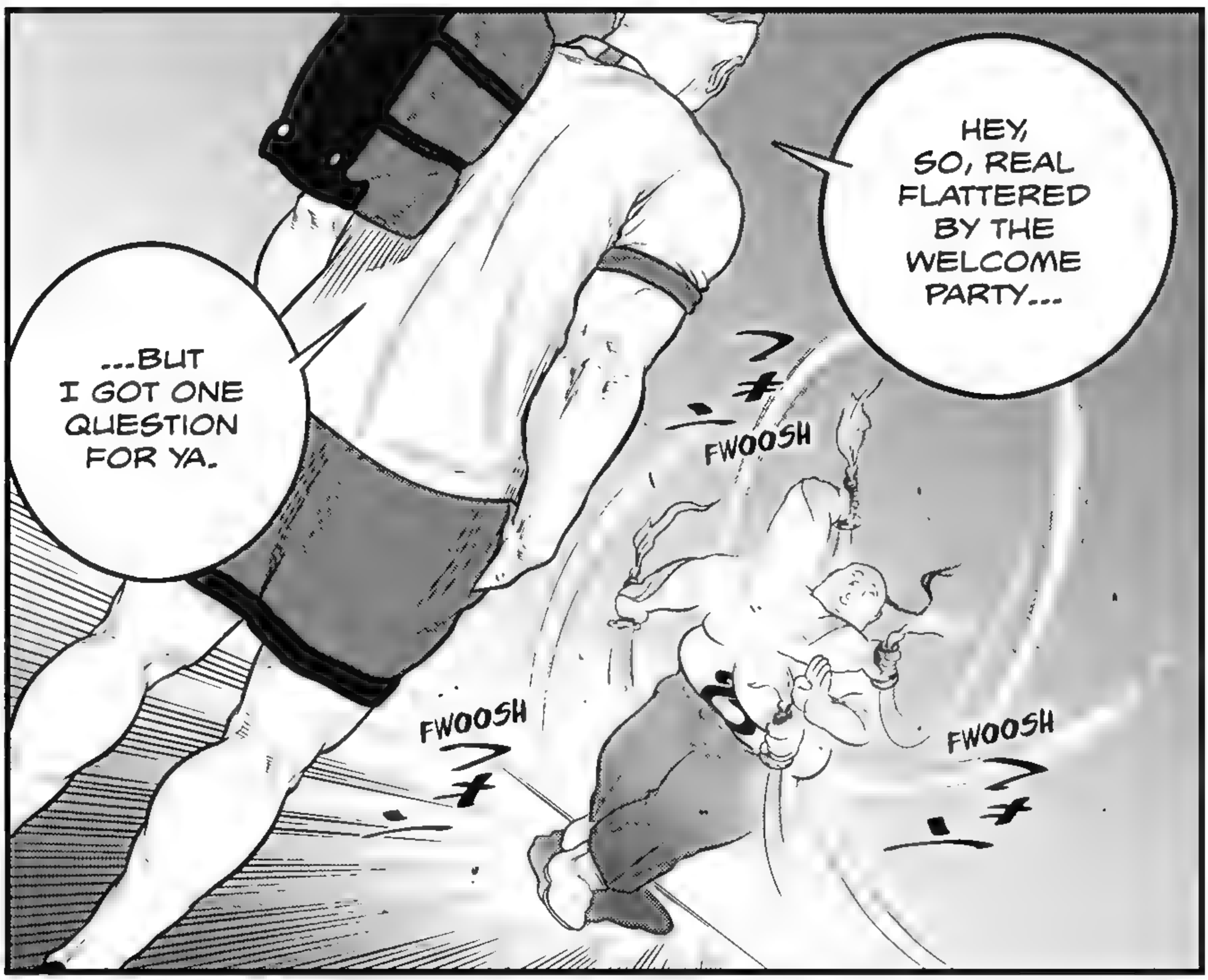
HUH? ISN'T THAT...
?!
...THE GUY FROM THE AIRPORT?

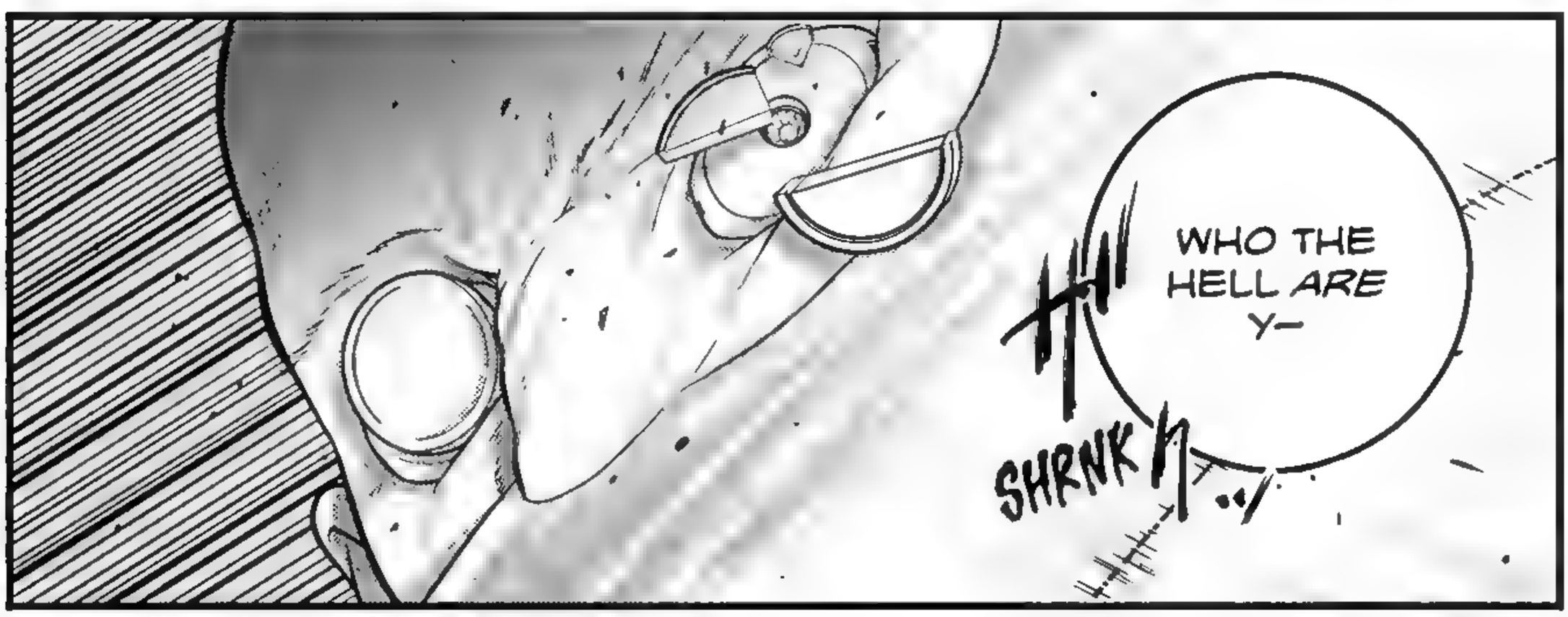
YEAH! DON'T THINK YOU NEED US!
I-I THINK I'D BETTER GET GOING!

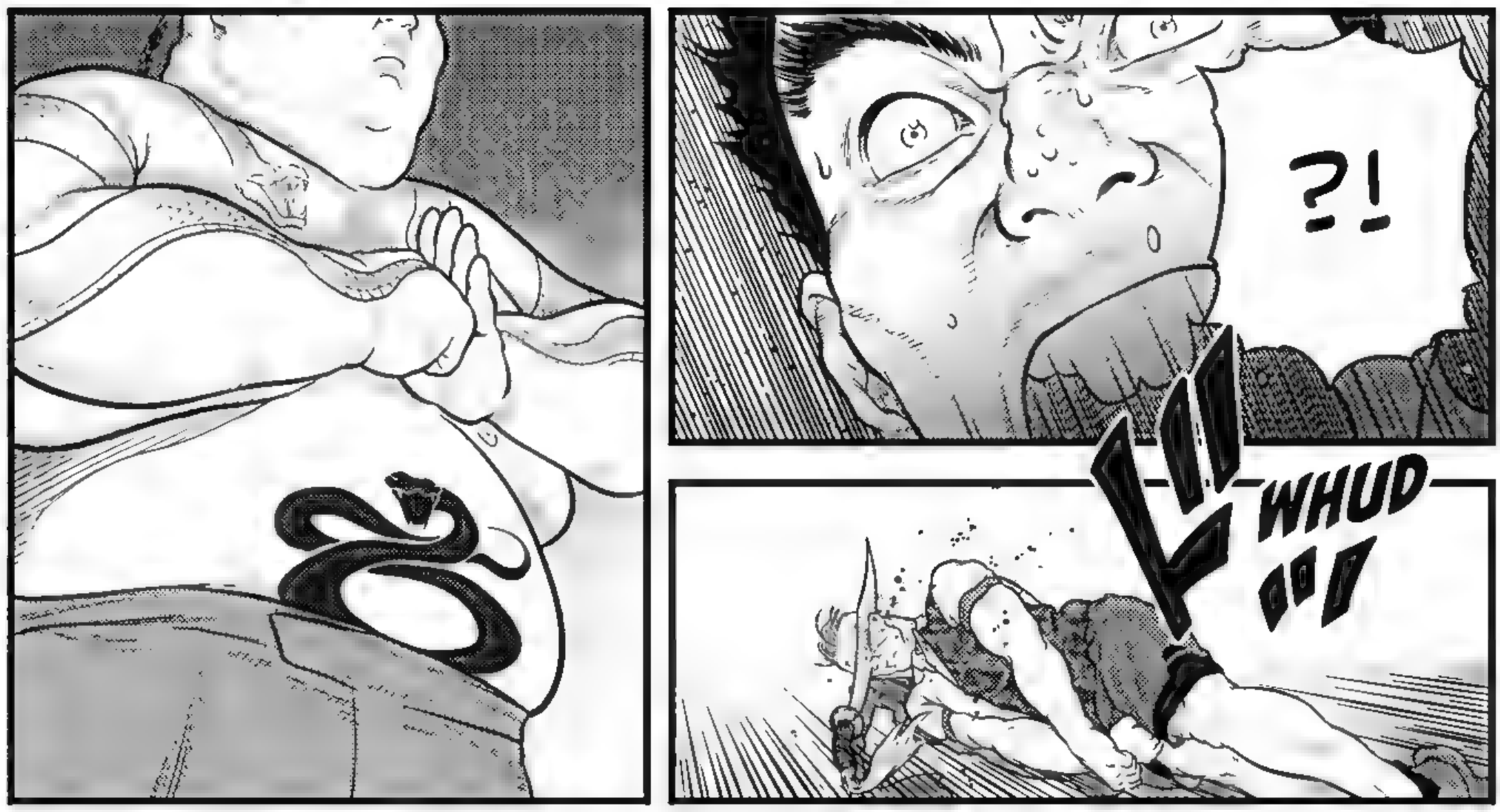
JOBS 1
WE'LL LET YOU YAMBARU AND QINGSHE GUYS WORK THINGS OUT AMONG YOURSELVES!
HM?

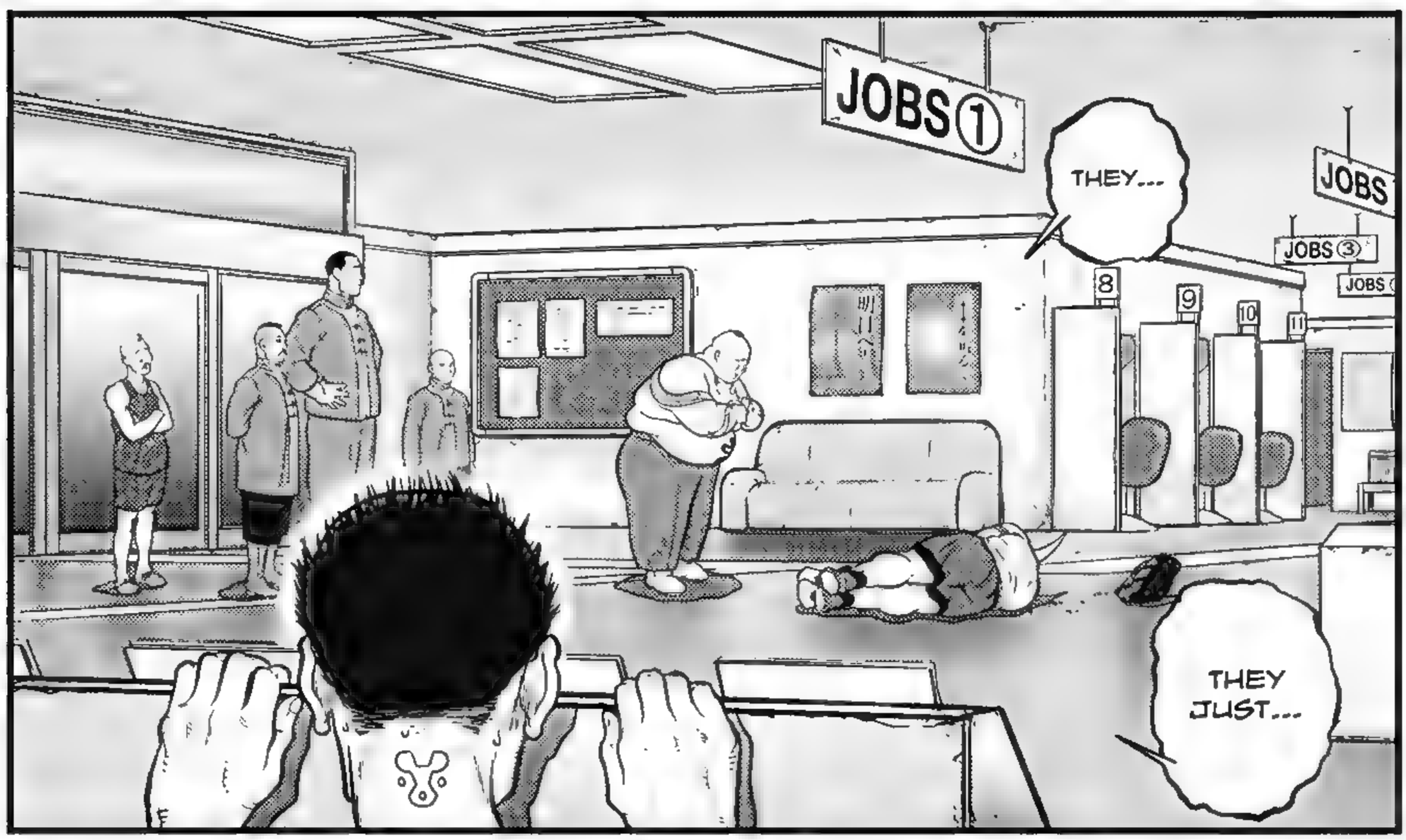

SHHHK...
"YAM-BARU"?
"QING-SHE"?

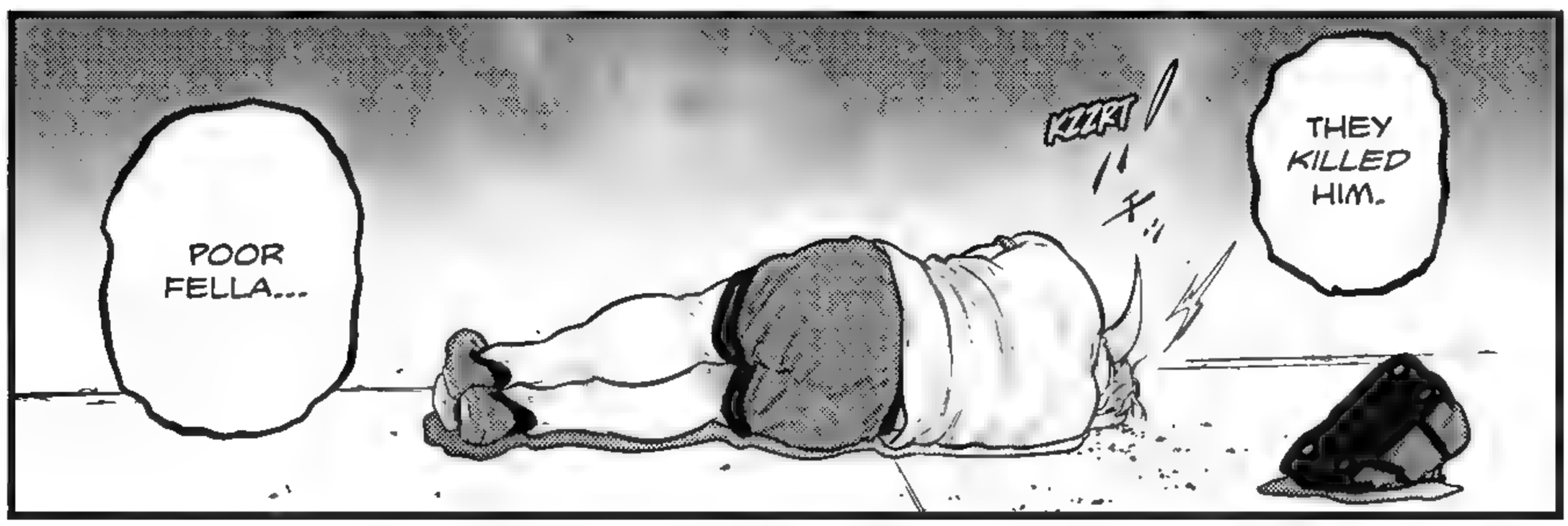
WHAT IS THIS, ROMANCE OF THE THREE KINGDOMS?
NO WAY.


HEY, SO, REAL FLATTERED BY THE WELCOME PARTY...
...BUT I GOT ONE QUESTION FOR YA.
FWOOSH
FWOOSH
FWOOSH


WHO THE HELL ARE Y—
SHRNK


?!
WHUD


JOBS 1
THEY...
JOBS
JOBS 3
8
9
10
11
THEY JUST...


POOR FELLA...
KZZZT
THEY KILLED HIM.

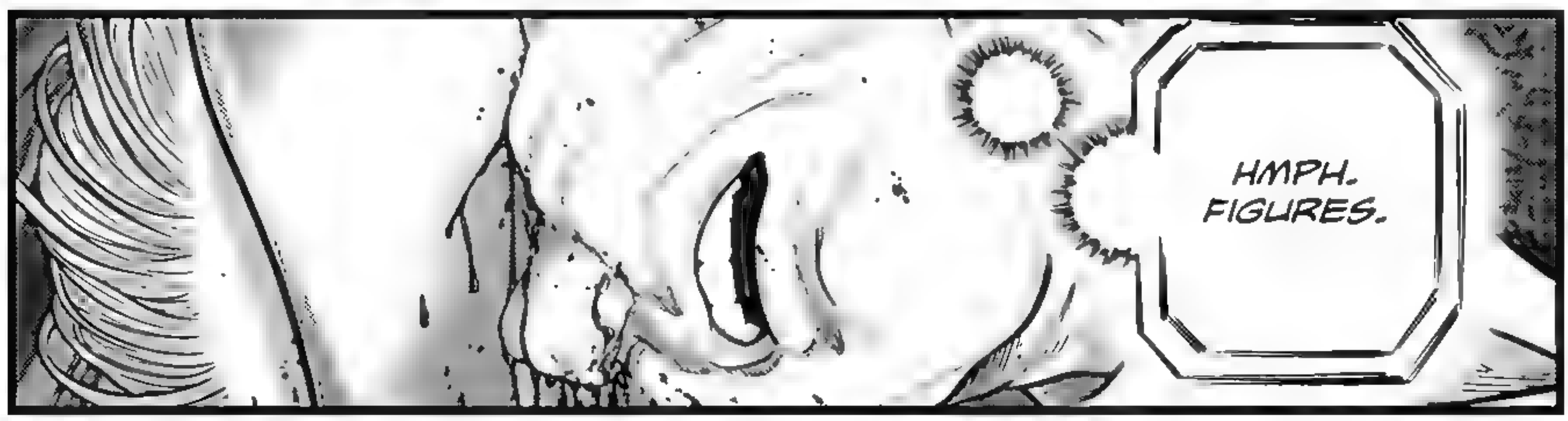
IT'S NOTHIN'. JUST A LITTLE GLITCH OR SOMETHIN'.

HM? YOU FEELING ALL RIGHT?

I'D HOPED FOR A MORE *EXCITING* BOUT.

THE ROAR OF A TIGER, YET THIN AS PAPER.

HAH!

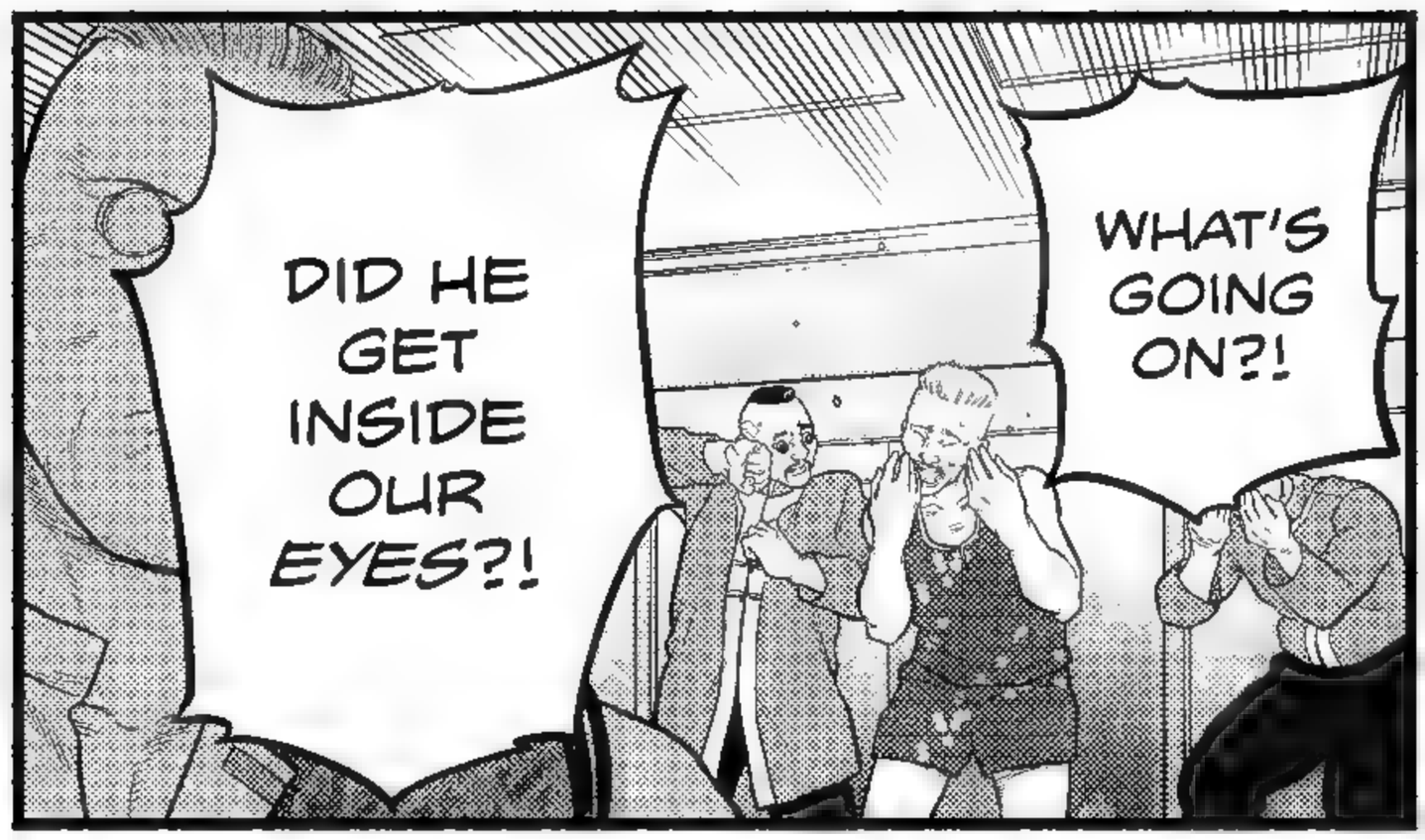


BZZRX

SNAP

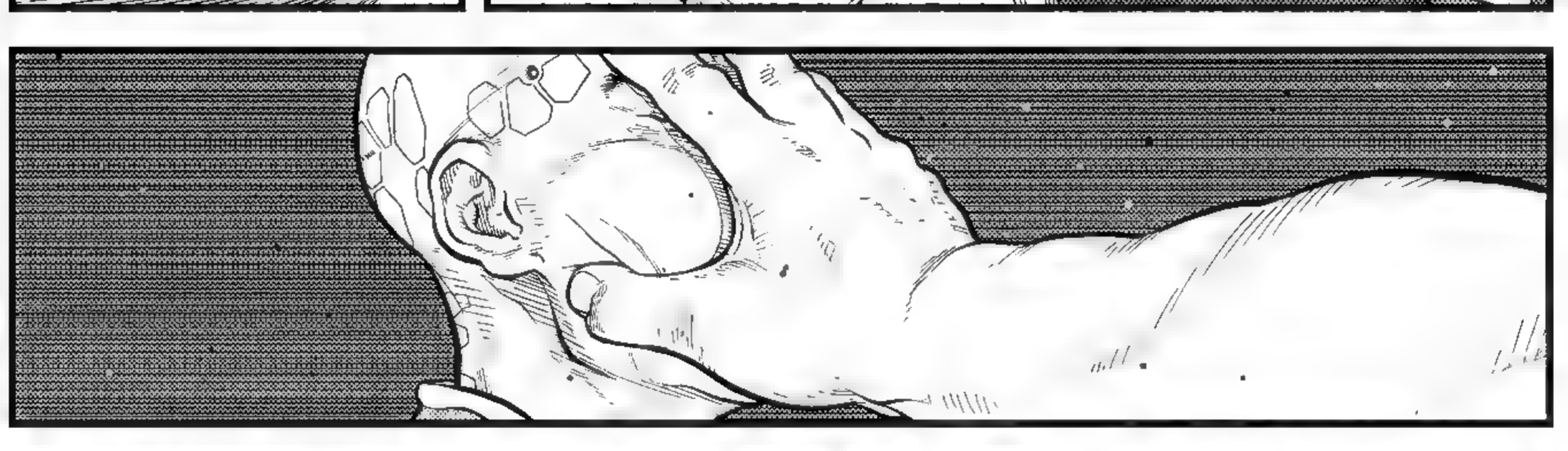
FKA-

FWUMP



FW-
这个混蛋!!
RSH
You rat bastard!

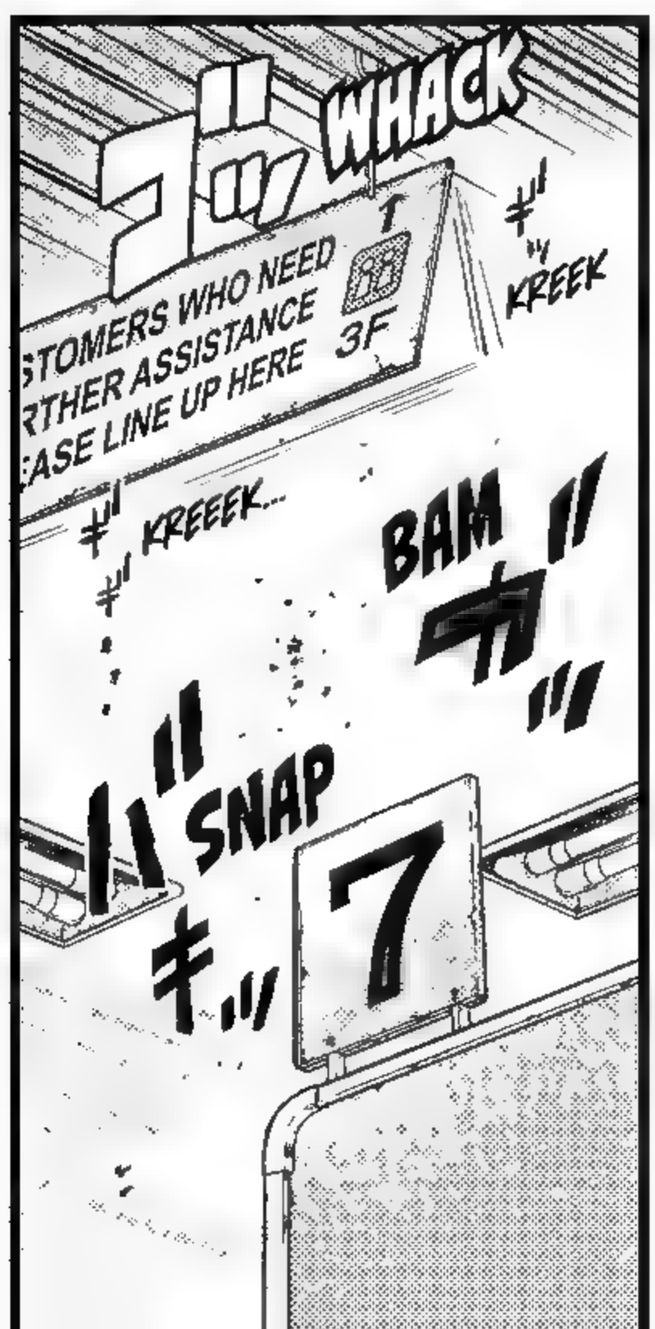
MORE OF THE FIGHT-YOU-OVER-THE-NET TYPE.
I MIGHT NOT LOOK IT, BUT I'M VERY SENSITIVE.



KA-
KRNCH

...DON'T MIND GETTIN' MY HANDS DIRTY WHEN I HAVE TO.
...?!
'COURSE...

WHAM
C'MON! THOUGHT THIS WAS A WEL-COME PARTY!
LET'S GET TO THE DANCIN'!
8
JOBS ②
JOBS


WHACK
STOMERS WHO NEED RTHER ASSISTANCE ASE LINE UP HERE
3F
KREEK
KREEEK...
BAM
SNAP
7

GAAAAH!
FWAP
FWAP
TREMBLE
TREMBLE
HUH?
WHUMP
S-SURE, FELLA...
WHO ARE THEY?
THESE YARNBALLS AN' CHEAP-SKATES YER YAMMERIN' ABOUT.
HEY. FILL ME IN.
ZZRK
ZZRK
HUMAN TRAFFICKING, SMUGGLING, MURDER...
...YOU NAME IT, THE QINGSHE ARE IN ON IT. THE WHOLE ATOLL'S FLOODED WITH CYBERDRUGS THEY BRING OVER. AS FOR THE—
THESE GUYS ARE THE QING-SHE. THE GREEN SNAKE TRIAD.
SNKT

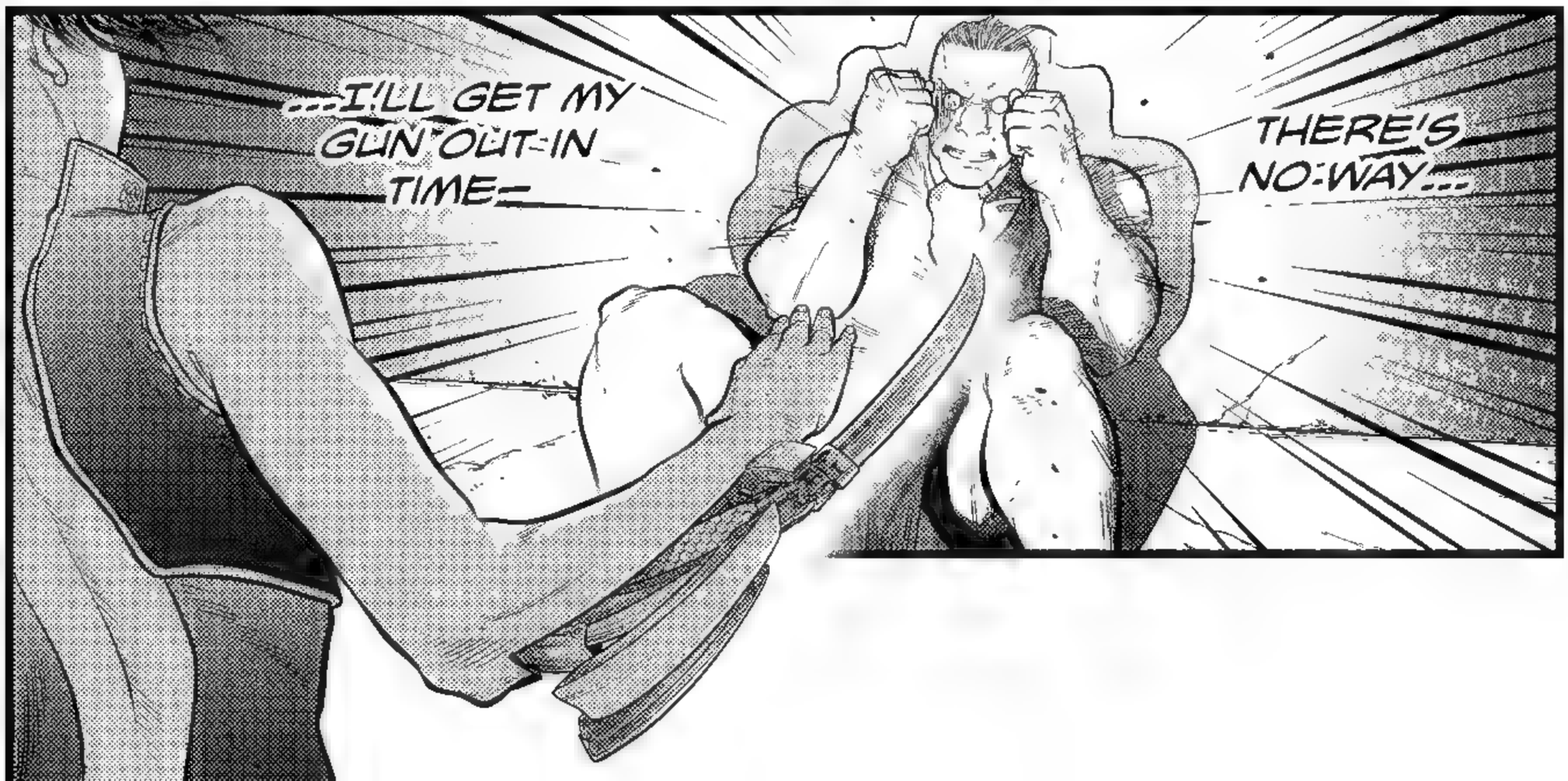
CHK
KAVRRM

?!

FWSH
ERP!

DAMN IT...
SLAM
?!

EEP!
HRAH!
SKNNT
FWSH
HRNH!
SKKRT


...I'LL GET MY GUN OUT IN TIME—
THERE'S NO WAY...

KZZRT

WHOMP
FWISH
目你
You little—
SHH
RRK
...!!
FW-
UMPH
...!

WHO ARE–

WH...

THE AREA OUT FRONT IS SWARMING WITH QINGSHE.

...

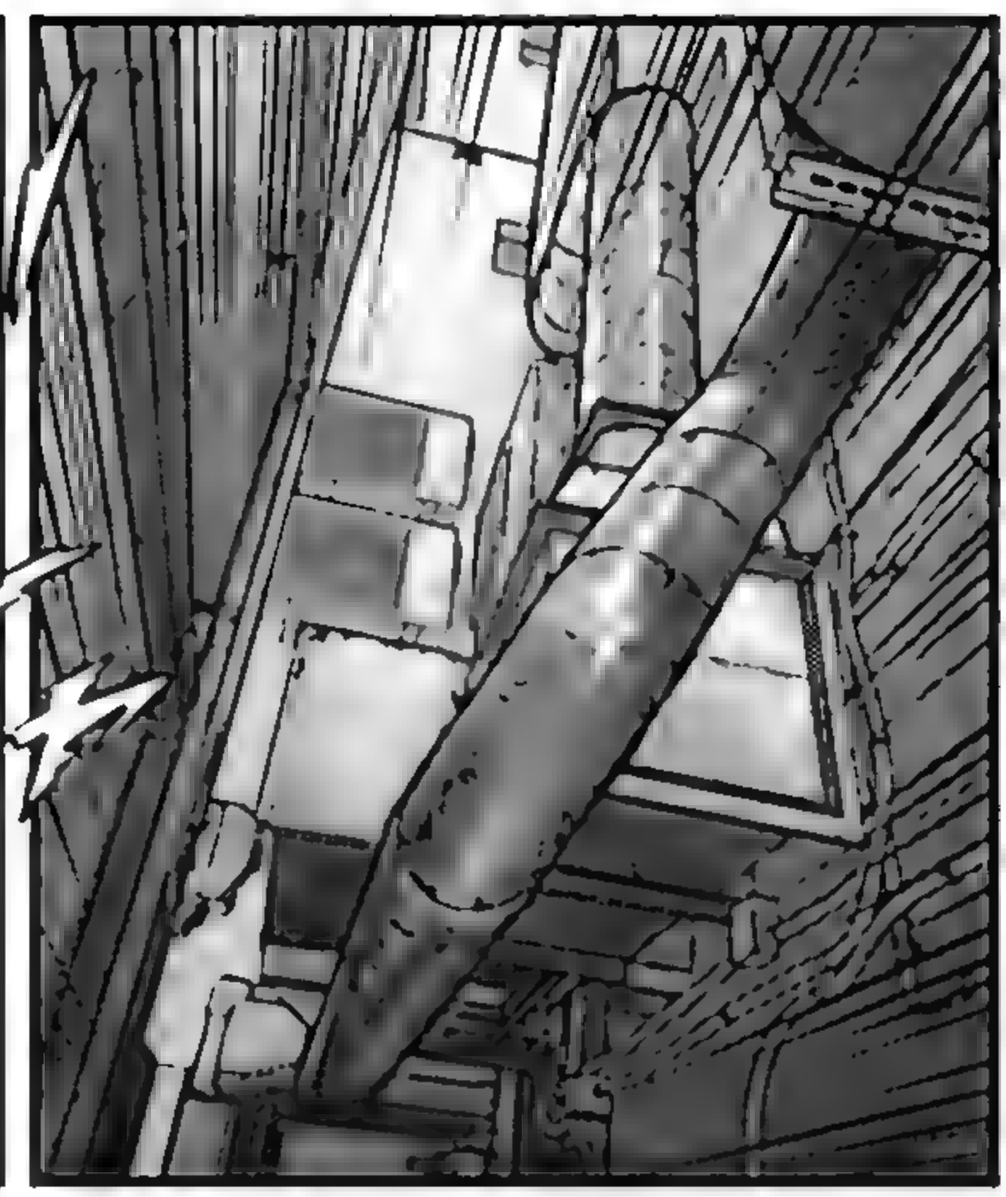
KSHNK

TOO MANY TO HANDLE AT ONCE. TIME TO MAKE AN EXIT.

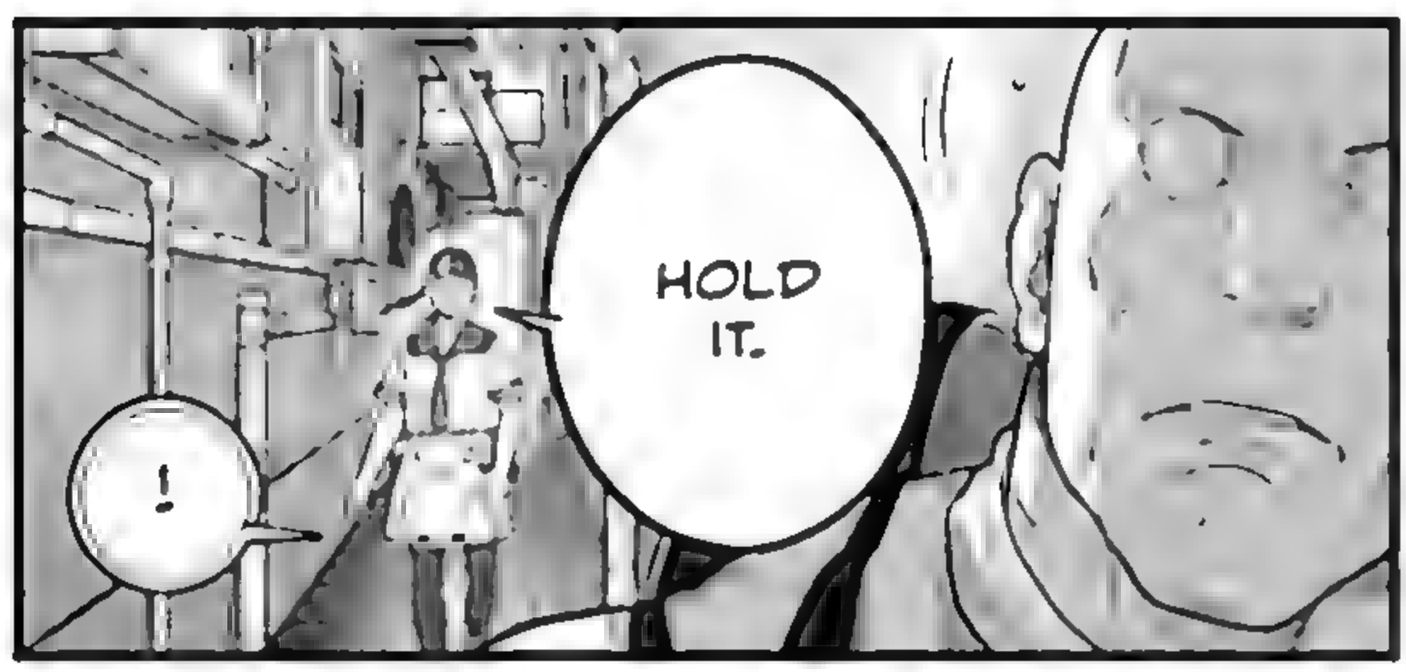
THINK YOU CAN KEEP UP, BATOU?

?!

SPLISH



WHO ARE YOU?! HOW DO YOU KNOW MY—
THIS WAY. COME ON.
HEY!

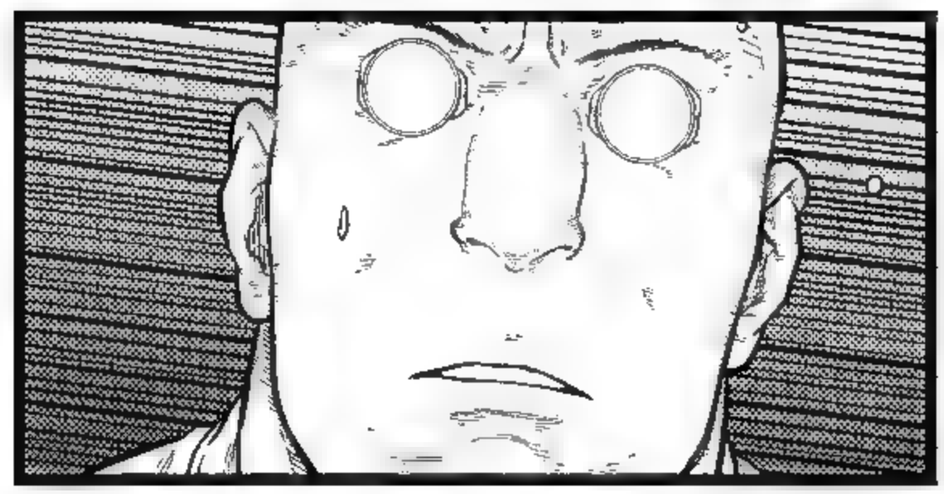

HOLD IT.
!

YOU'RE GETTING SOFT, BATOU.
?!

PICK THE WRONG ROUTE AND WE'LL BE NECK-DEEP IN TRIADS AGAIN.
LET'S TAKE A MINUTE TO—
HEY! START COUGHIN' UP AN-SWERS. HOW DO YOU KNOW WHO I—

GOTTA BE READY FOR WHATEVER COMES AT YOU *OFFLINE*, TOO.

YOU CAN'T EXPECT TO FINISH EVERY FIGHT OVER THE NET.



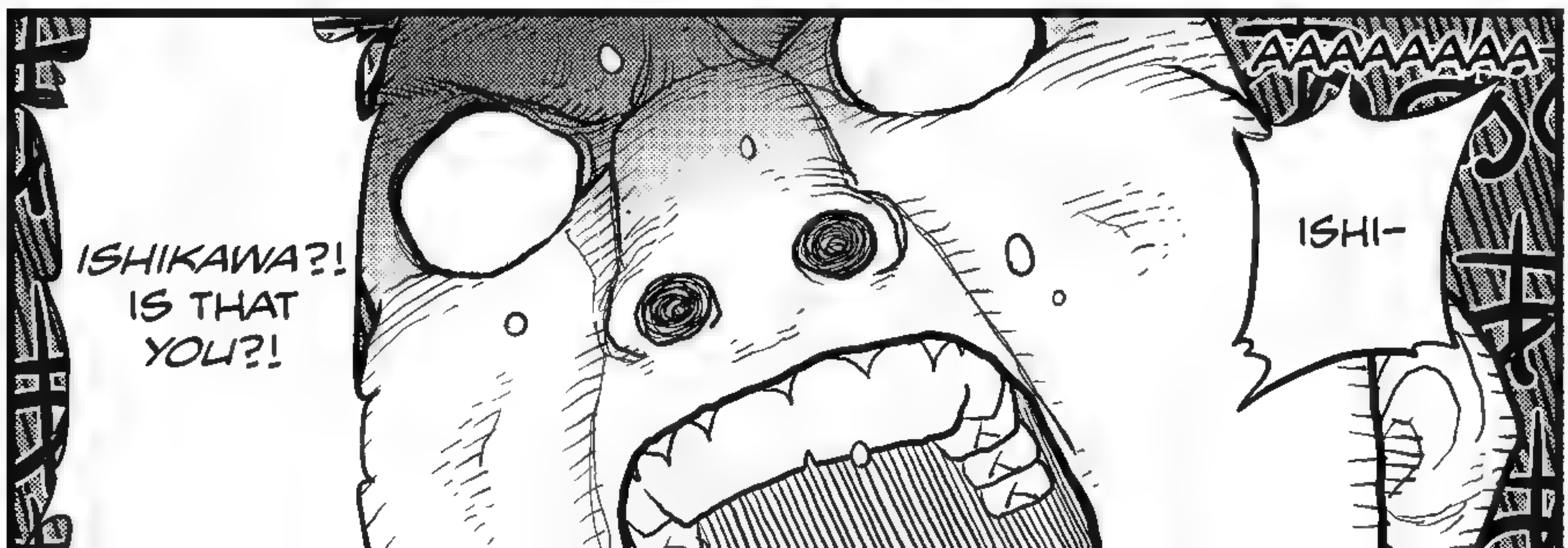
MAJOR? IS THAT YOU?

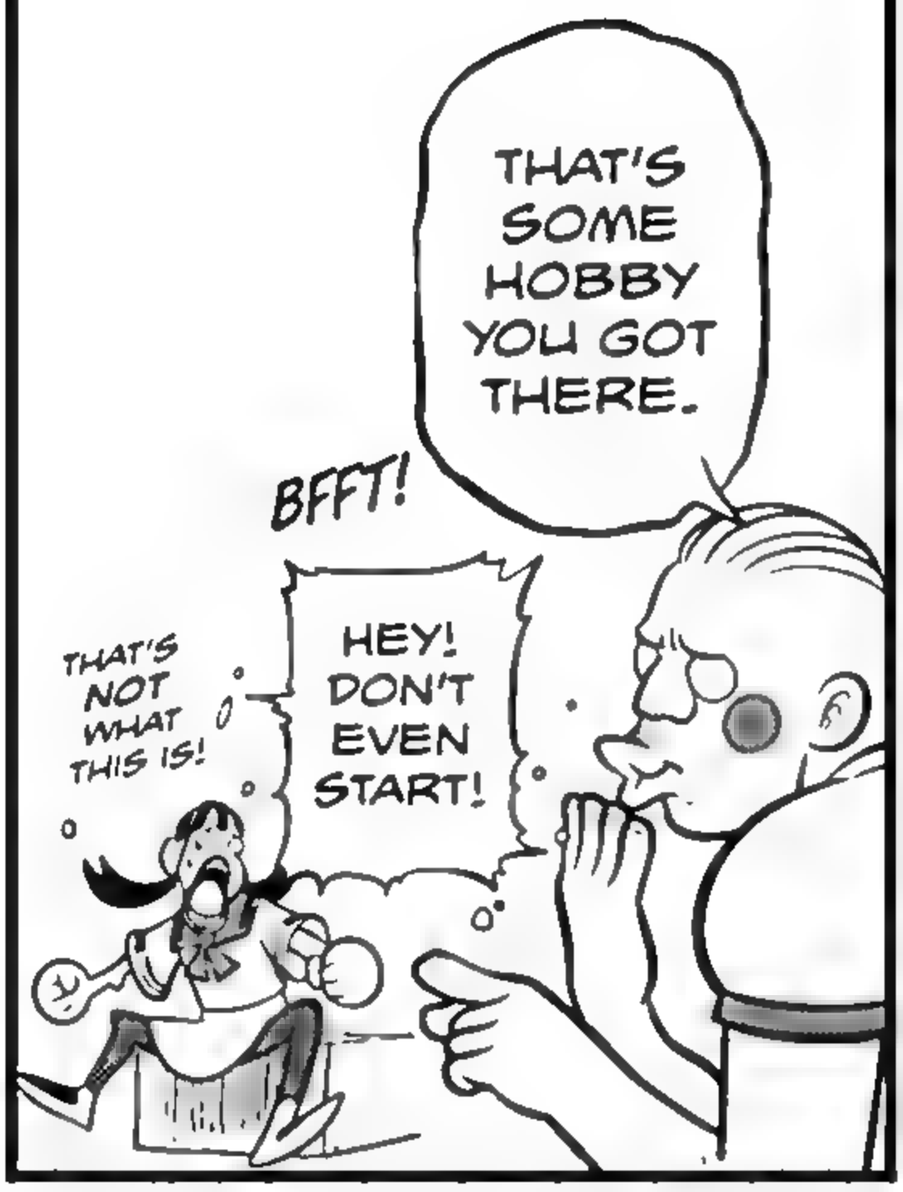
NO. THERE'S NO WAY.
?
WAIT.

THEN WHO ARE YOU?!
HMPH.
DON'T YOU DARE LUMP ME IN WITH THAT SHE-APE.
WH-
"SHE-APE" ...?!

YOU GOT THE ENCRYPTION KEY, RIGHT? GIVE IT A WHIRL.
FINALLY FIGURED IT OUT?

WHAT'S UP?
GEEZERRK...

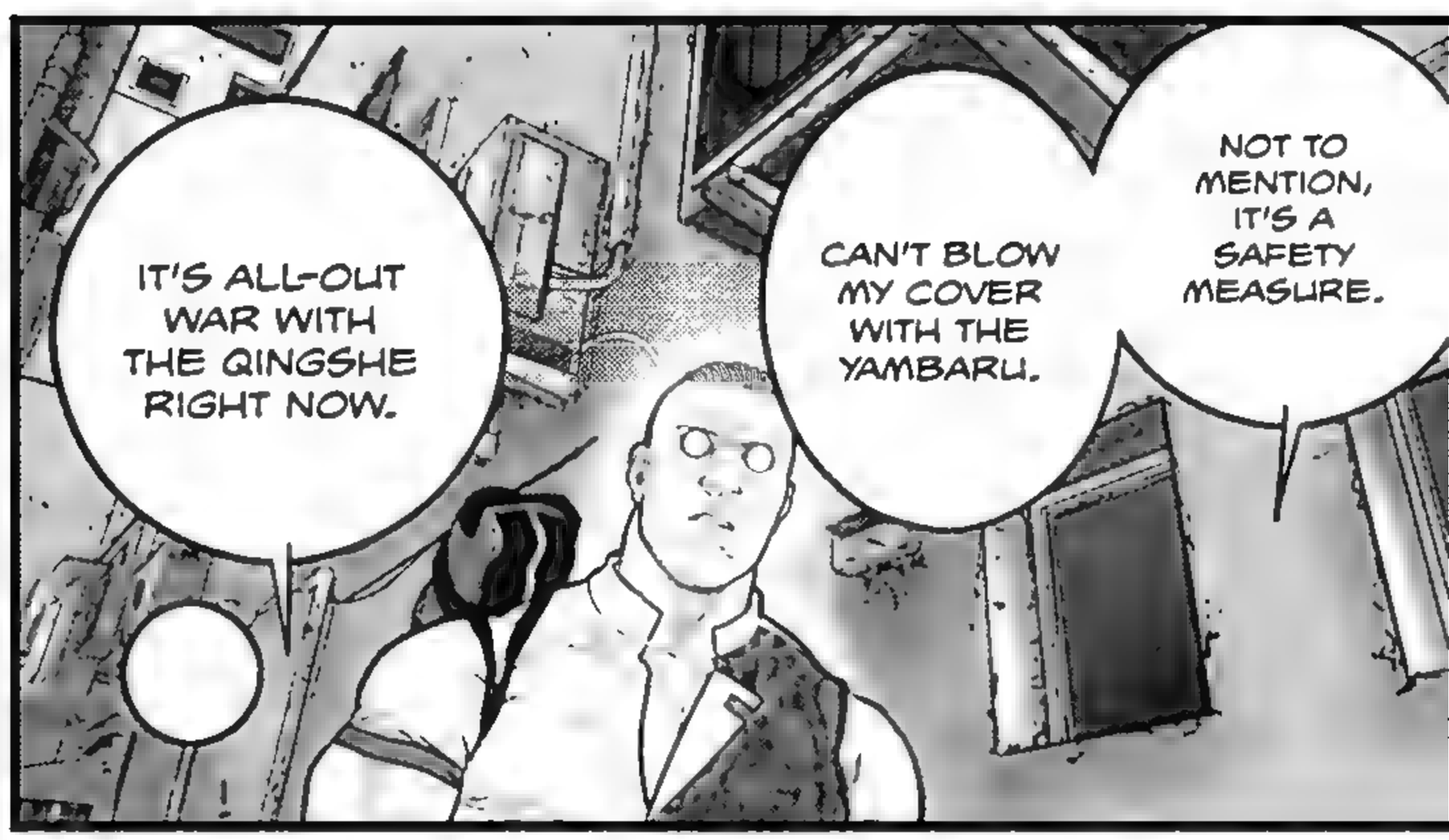

ISHIKAWA?! IS THAT YOU?!
AAAAAAAAA
ISHI-


THAT'S SOME HOBBY YOU GOT THERE.
BFFT!
THAT'S NOT WHAT THIS IS!
HEY! DON'T EVEN START!

WHY'RE YOU...?
WHOA WHOA WHOA WHOA
WHAT ...?!
REALLY ?!

...AND THIS IS THE ONLY ONE I COULD GET AHOLD OF AND OPERATE REMOTELY.
MY MAIN PROSTHETIC'S HAVING SOME TROUBLES. I NEEDED ANOTHER...

SO THAT'S WHY YOU WENT TO ALL THIS TROUBLE.


IT'S ALL-OUT WAR WITH THE QINGSHE RIGHT NOW.
CAN'T BLOW MY COVER WITH THE YAMBARU.
NOT TO MENTION, IT'S A SAFETY MEASURE.

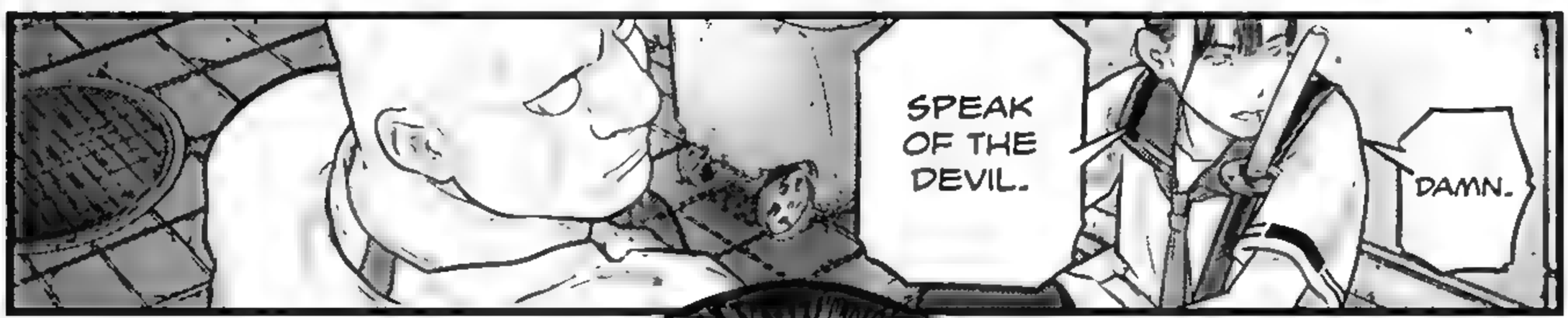
THESE TRIADS ARE REAL BAD NEWS.

FIGURED THE JOB CENTER WOULD BE A SAFE SPOT TO MEET UP. WOULDN'T HAVE IMAGINED...
THE SYNDICATE CALLS ITSELF YAMBARU INDUSTRIES. ALL EMPLOYMENT ON THE ATOLL RUNS THROUGH IT.
...THE QINGSHE WALKING STRAIGHT ONTO YAMBARU TURF.

?!

THE QINGSHE BOSS IS A GUY NAMED—

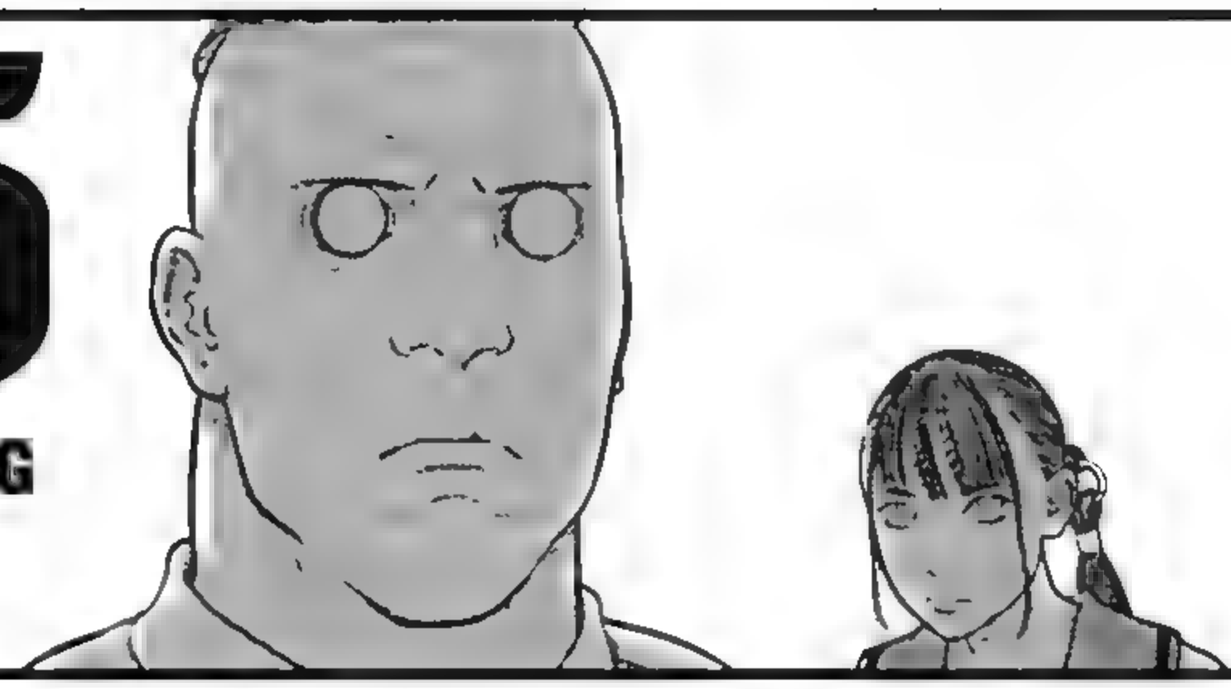
FOUND 'EM! THEY'RE BACK HERE!

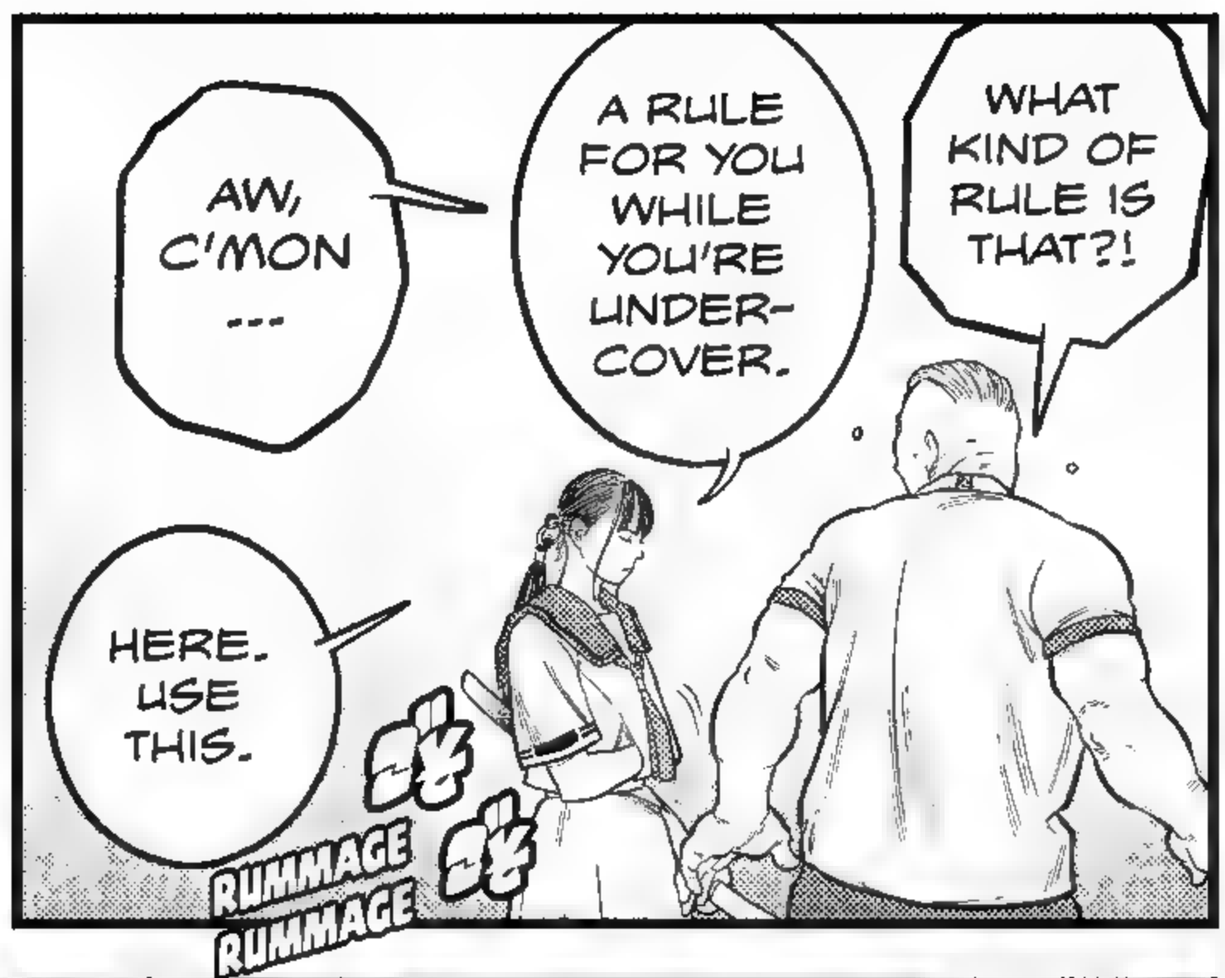

SPEAK OF THE DEVIL.
DAMN.

SAY HELLO TO THE QINGSHE BOSS.

05

THE BEGINNING OF THINGS




AW, C'MON ...
A RULE FOR YOU WHILE YOU'RE UNDER-COVER.
WHAT KIND OF RULE IS THAT?!
HERE. USE THIS.
RUMMAGE
RUMMAGE

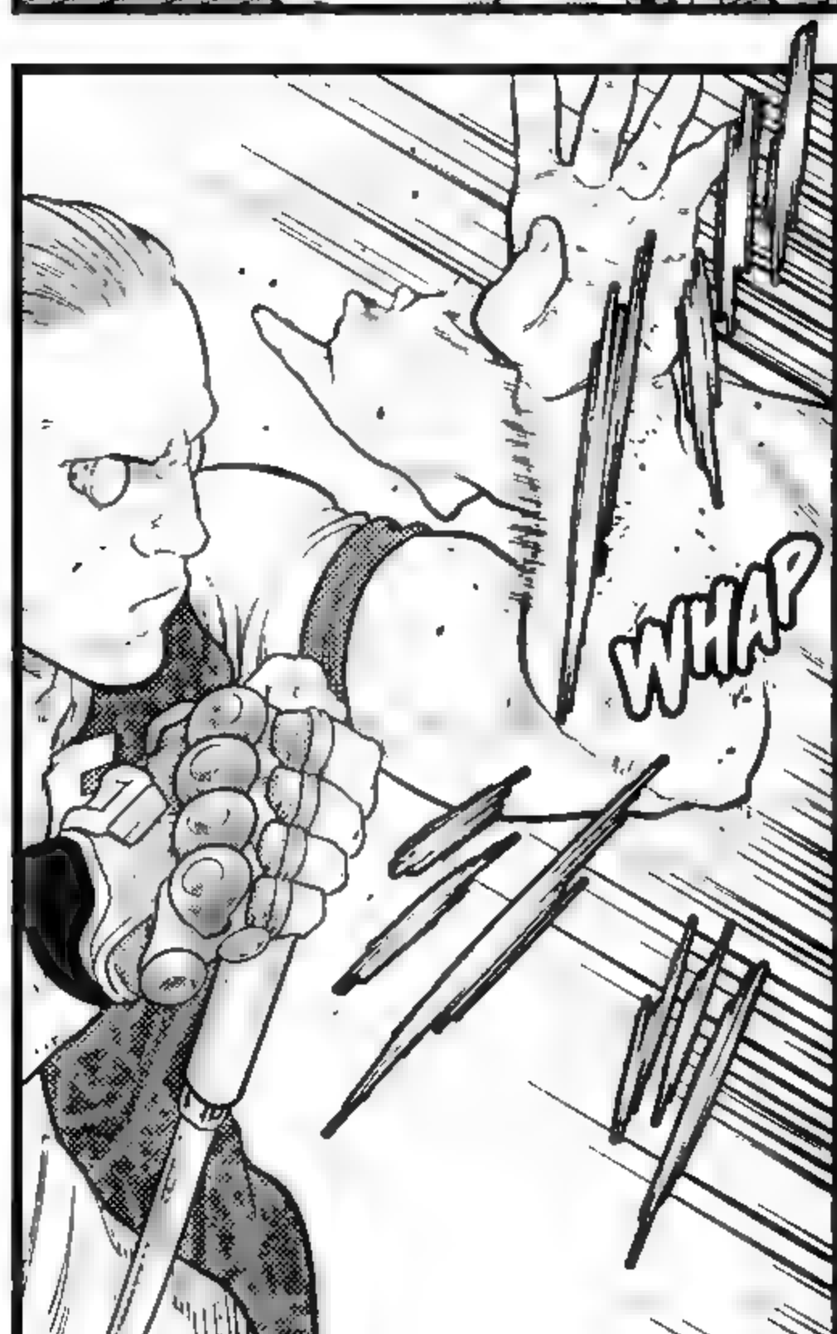
HOW OLD-SCHOOL CAN YOU GET?
WHAT? A SHIV?

WHAT ARE YOU DOING?
DON'T WORRY. I HAVEN'T GONE AS SOFT AS YOU THINK.
THAT'S NOT THE ISSUE. MIGRANT WORKERS DON'T CARRY. PUT THE GUN AWAY.

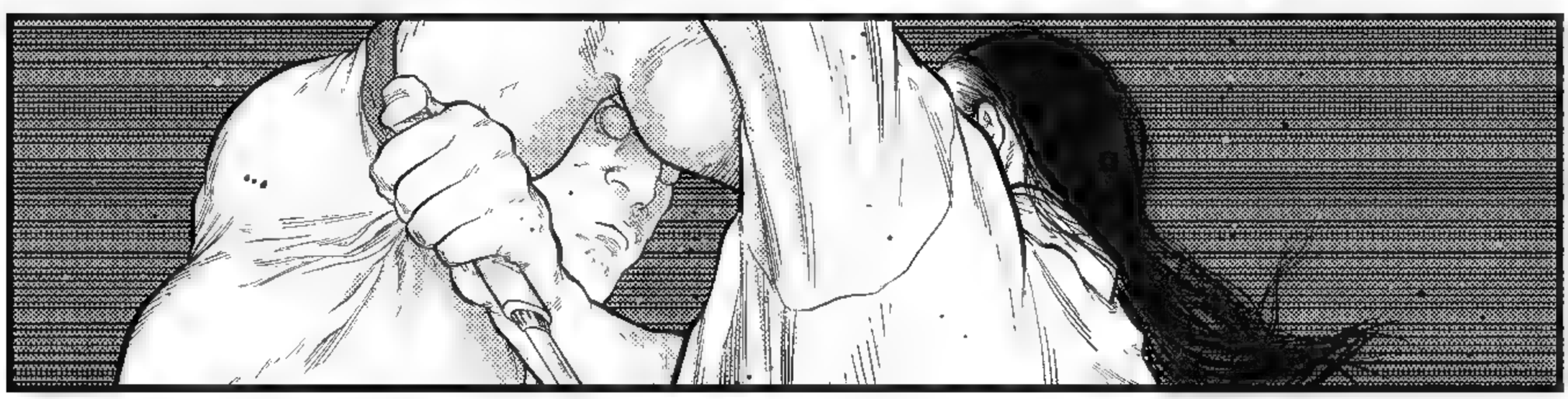
BUT I'LL BE TAKING MY STUN GLOVE FOR A WHIRL, TOO.
FINE. WHAT-EVER.
TUG

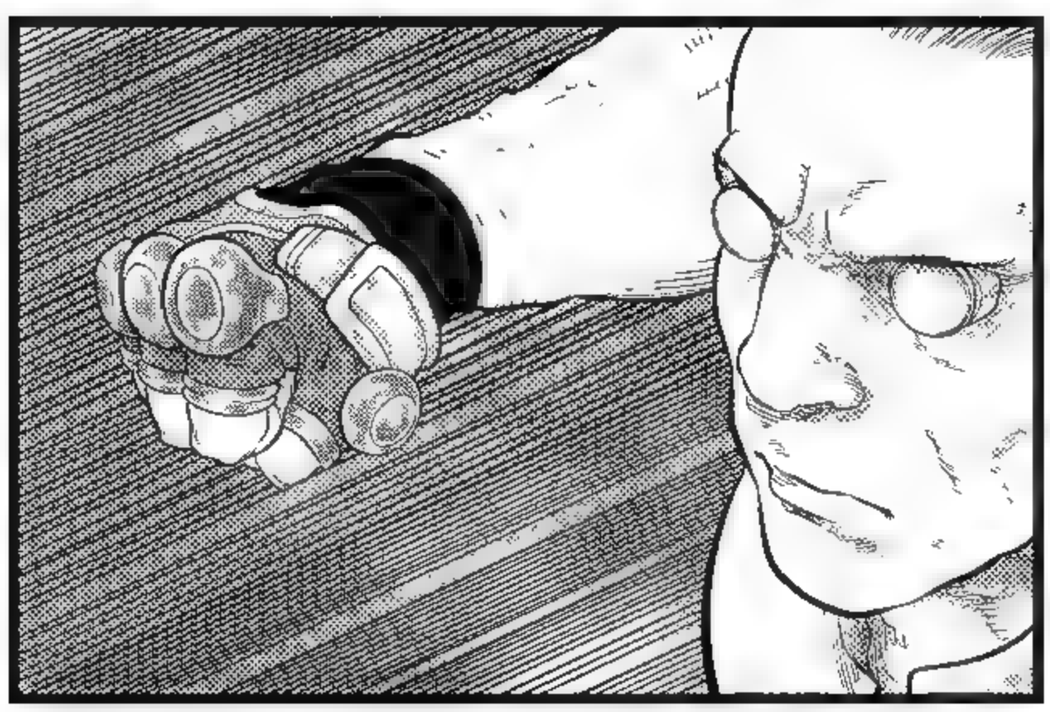
TOE TO TOE WITH THE TOP DOG, HM?
FIND ME AN OPENING. I'LL BE RIGHT HERE.

NO. I WILL HANDLE THIS MYSELF.
KRNCH...

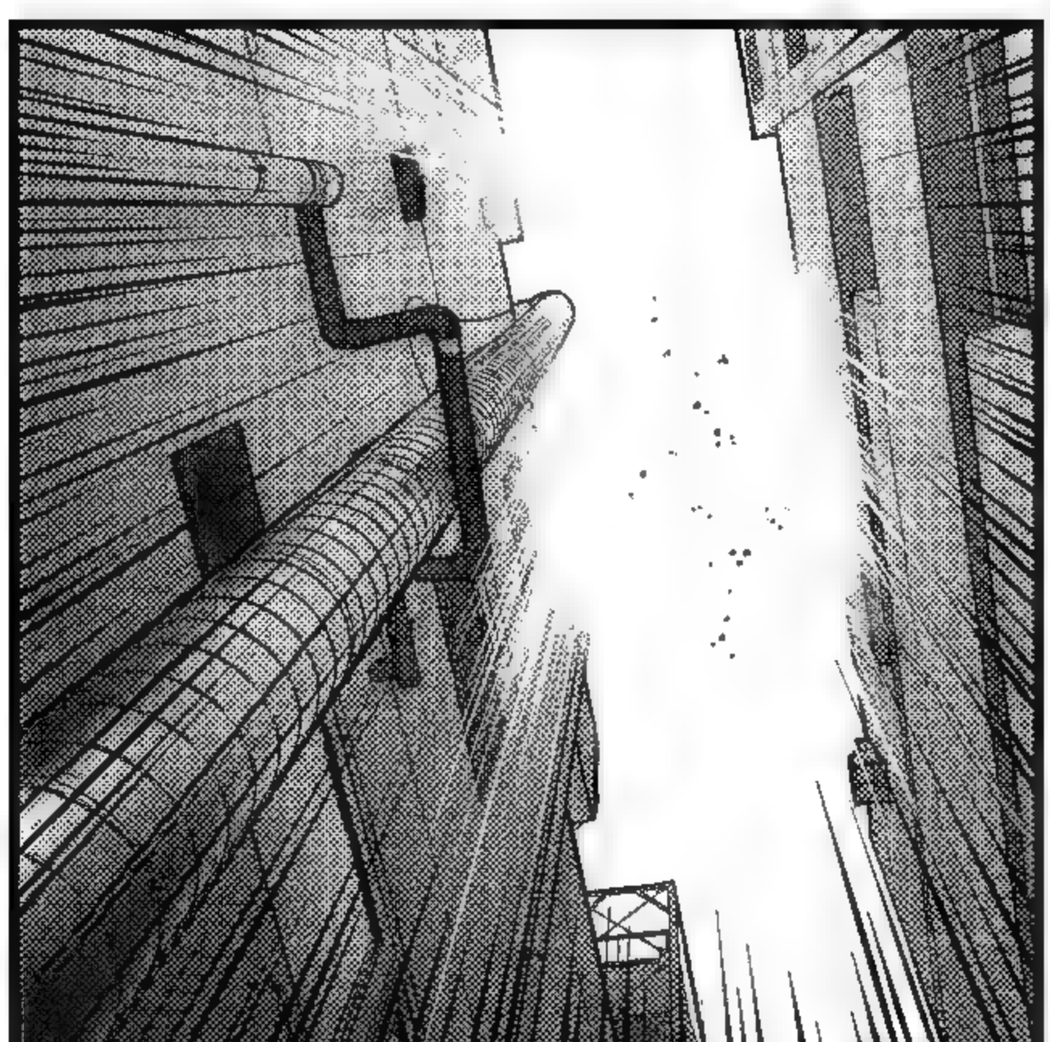

WHAP

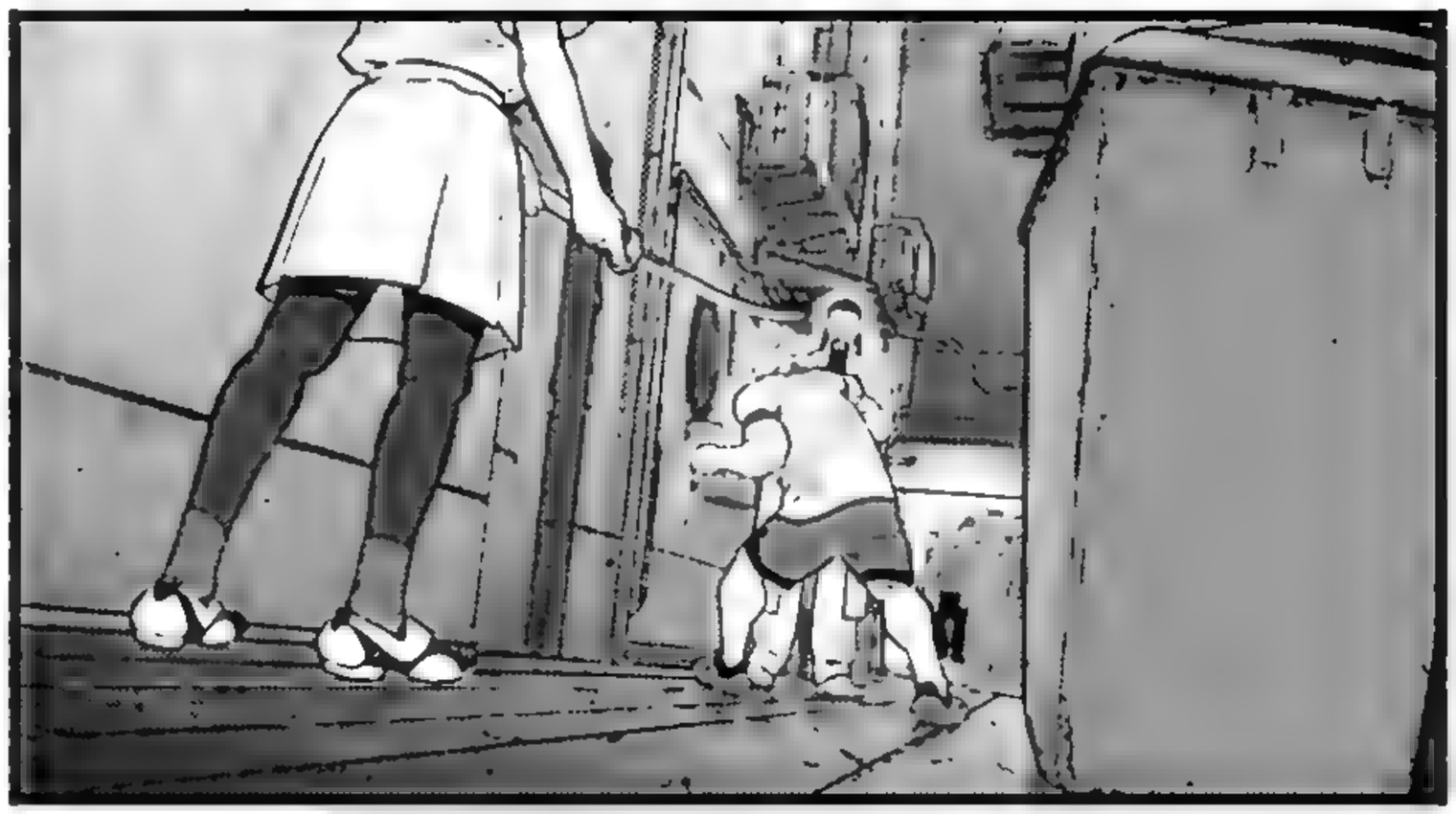
FWRSH
THWP
THP
THWP
THTHP

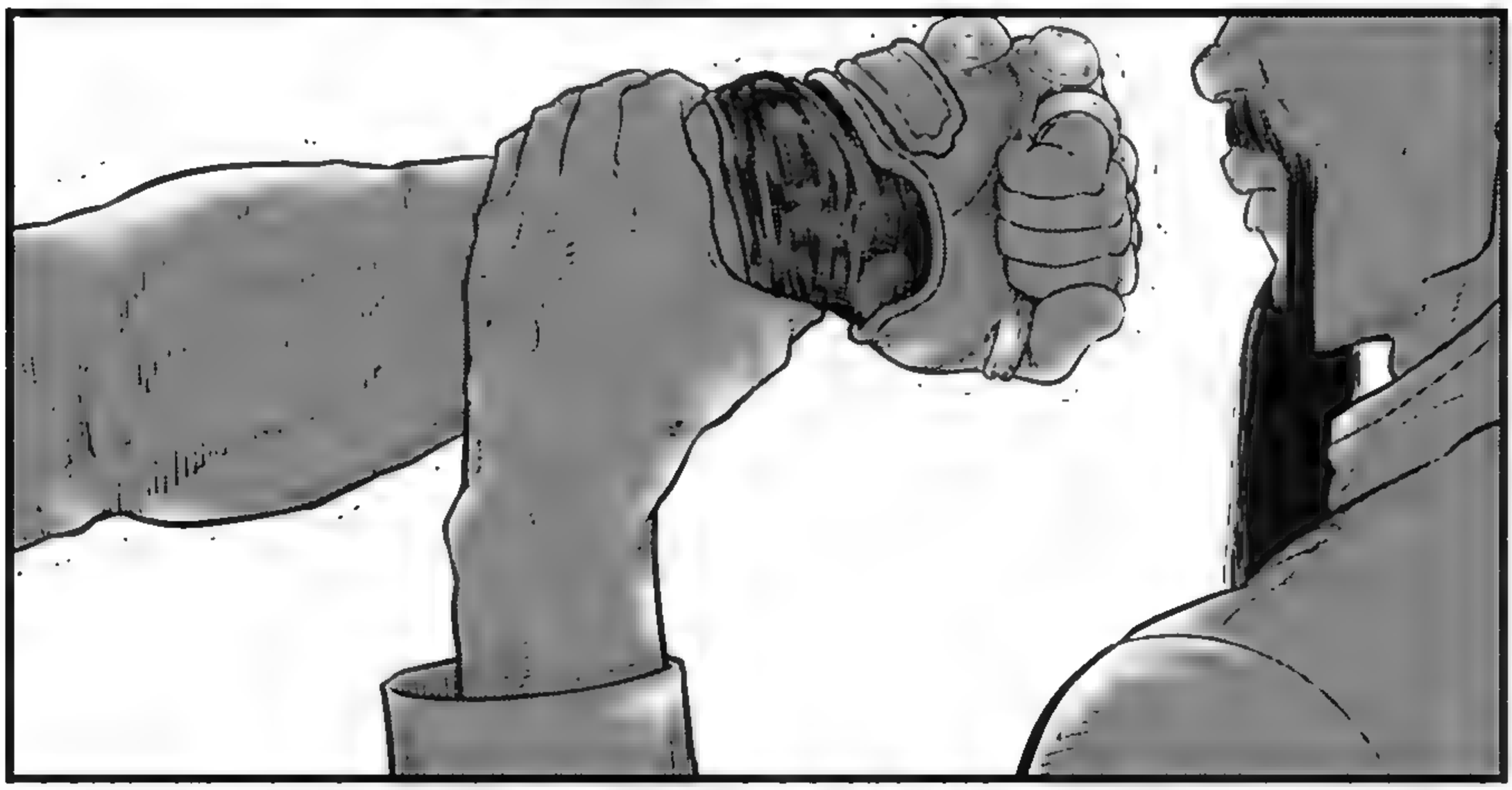




SHNK
SHNK







SQUEEZE...
!
LIKE STABBING SOMETHING MADE OF RUBBER INSTEAD OF METAL.

THE GIVE OF THE KNIFE WAS ALL WRONG.
YEAH. I SHOULD'VE SEEN THIS COMING.

HIS PROSTHETIC MUST BE REINFORCED. BUT WITH WHAT? CARBON NANOTUBE MUSCLE FIBER?

WHUMP

...HOW THINGS WORK AROUND HERE.
!
I HOPE THE QINGSHE HAVEN'T FORGOTTEN...

警察
POLICE
OKINAWA BELONGS TO YAMBARU INDUSTRIES. IT'S *OUR* TURF.

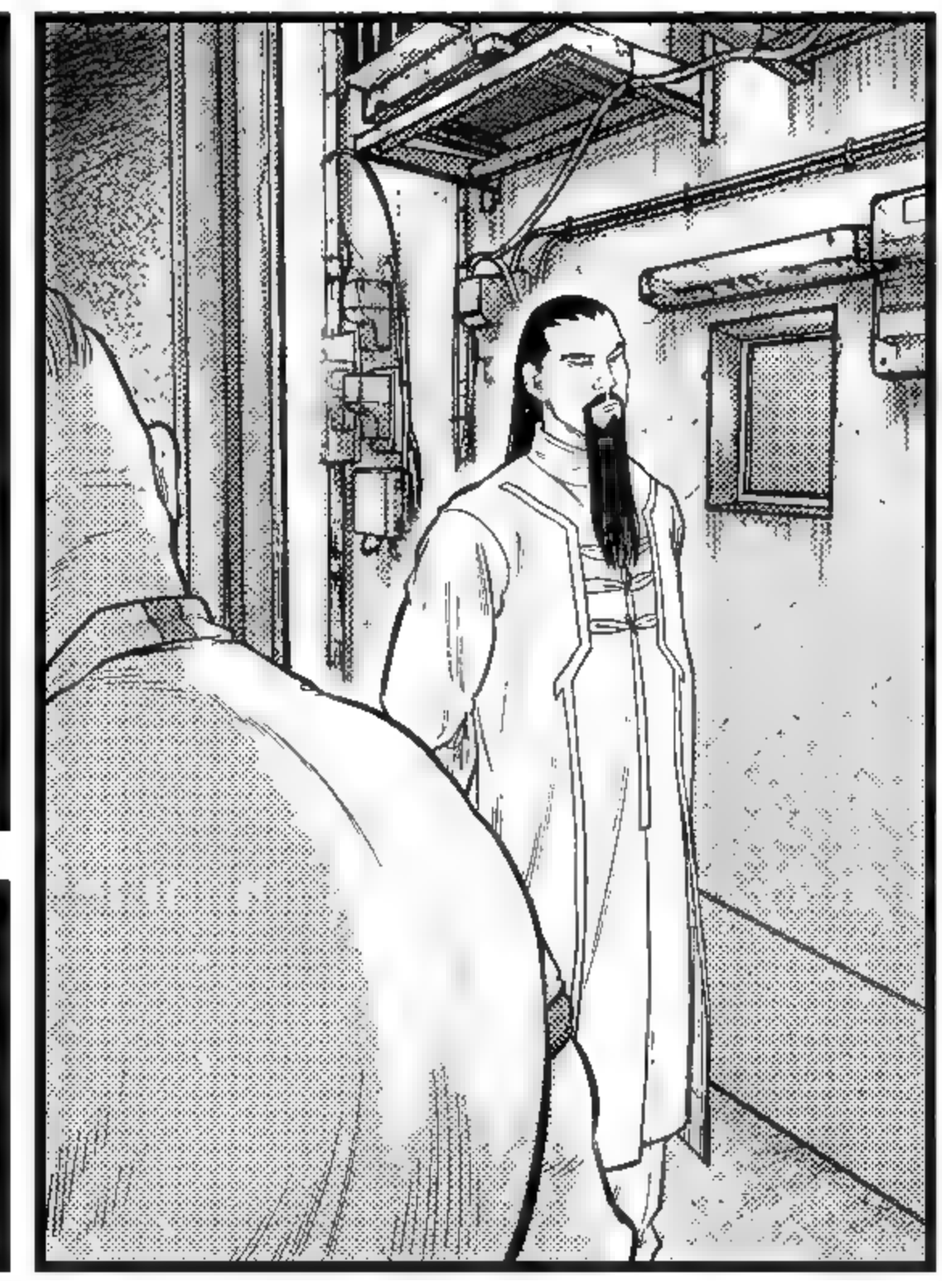
HAS THE ISLANDS' SO-CALLED SYNDICATE...
...ALWAYS BEEN ON SUCH FRIENDLY TERMS WITH THE AUTHORITIES?

AH. THE HEAD OF THE YAMBARU HIMSELF.

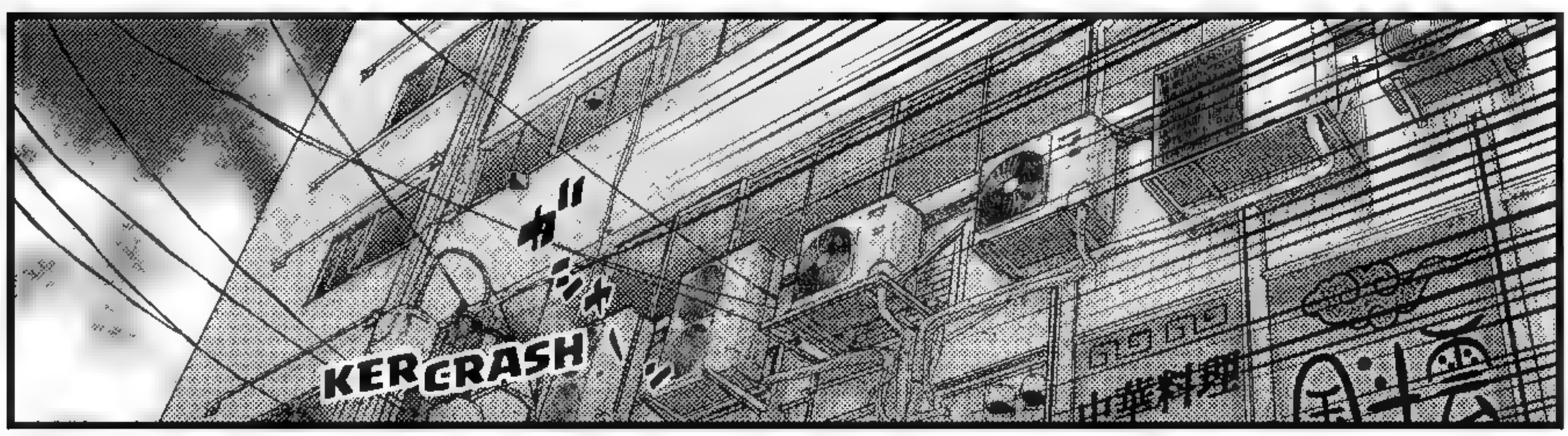
DON'T THINK I'VE MET YOU TWO. HOPE THE SNAKES AREN'T GIVING YOU ANY TROUBLE.

THOUGH YOU DON'T EXACTLY LOOK LIKE YOU'RE HERE FOR SIGHT-SEEING.

WHAM

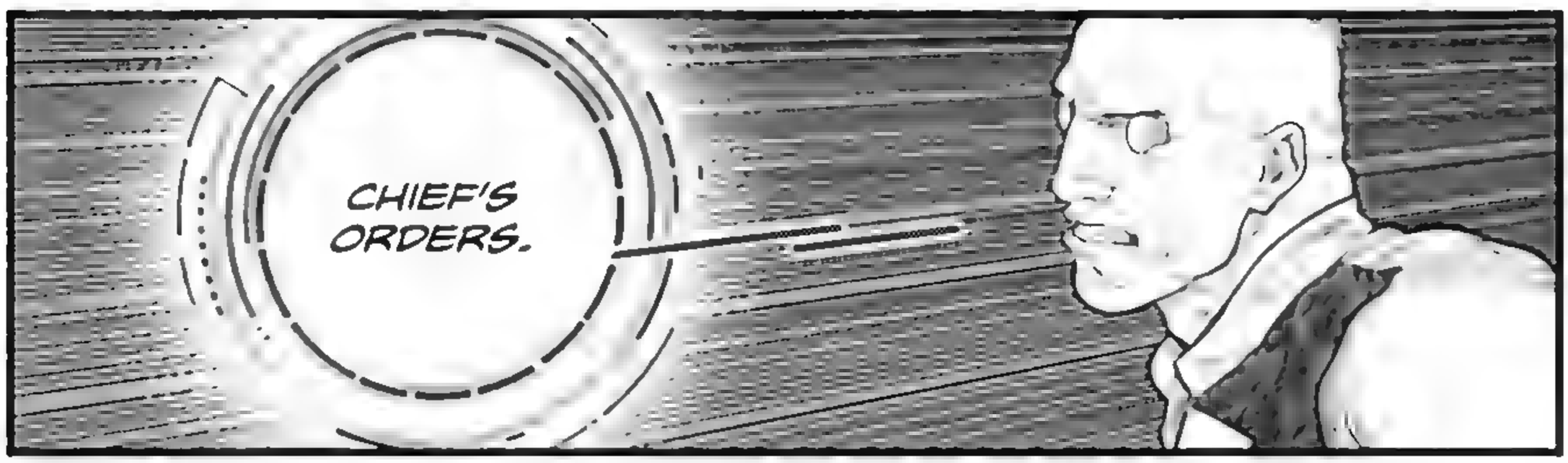


SLAM
HEY
OUTTA THE WAY!
DAMN RESTAU-RANTS AND YOUR SPICY FOOD!


KER CRASH
中華料理

I'D HEARD OF TECH LIKE THAT, BUT...
ULTRA-TOUGH PROSTHETICS.

WHAT BROUGHT YOU DOWN HERE, ANYWAY?
I'D RATHER NOT HAVE MADE CONTACT WITH SECTION 9 WHILE I'M INCOGNITO.
I'VE ALREADY GOT MY HANDS FULL WITH THIS TURF WAR.


CHIEF'S ORDERS.

I THOUGHT THAT'S WHAT TOGUSA'S LOOKING INTO. UP NORTH.

SAY AGAIN?

WE GOT A HIT. SIGNS OF THE MAJOR'S PRESENCE.

GREAT. DAMN SHE-APE NEVER LIKED TO MAKE THINGS EASY. DOES SHE THINK SHE'S STILL GOT US BY THE BALLS AFTER ALL THIS TIME?

IT IS. BUT WE GOT ANOTHER HIT HERE.

BEATS ME. PROBABLY TRYIN' TO SEND US SOME KINDA MESSAGE.

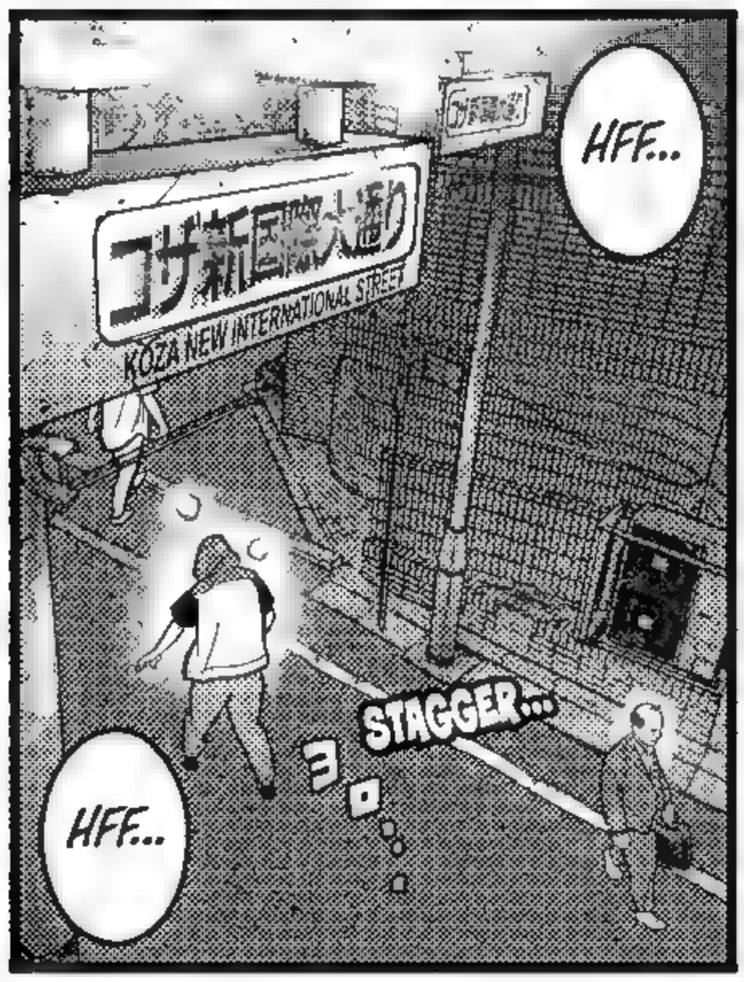
...WE DO KNOW THAT IT ALL LEADS BACK TO SOME KID.

DUNNO YET.

BUT...

WHAT THE HELL HAVE TOHOKU AND OKINAWA GOT IN COMMON?

ONE SHOH HASHIKAMI. OF OSAKI HEAVY INDUSTRIES.

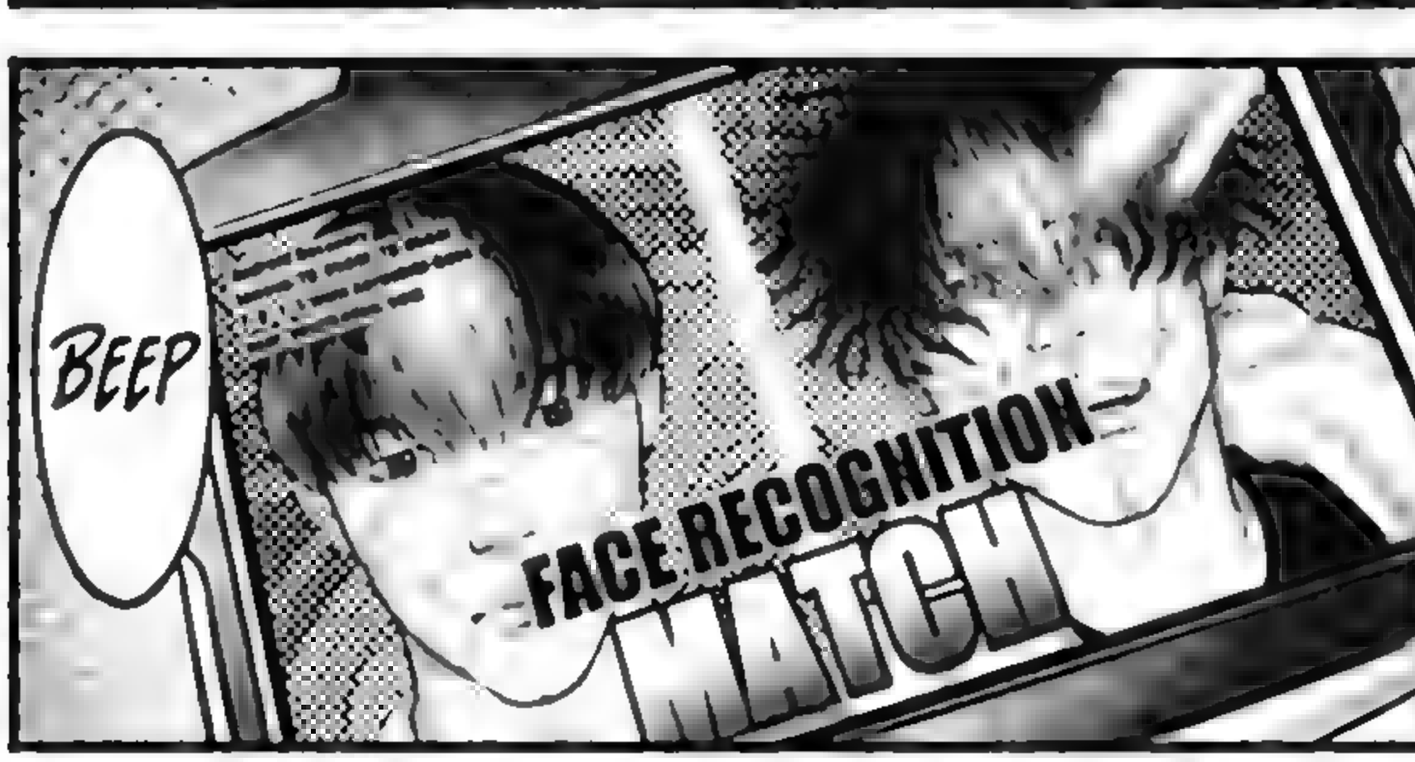


YOU. YOU'RE SHOH HASHIKAMI, YEAH?

MUST BE FROM OSAKI. SOME GOON SENT TO TRACK ME DOWN.
DAMN!

...
NGH!

SNAG
?!


BEEP
FACE RECOGNITION
MATCH

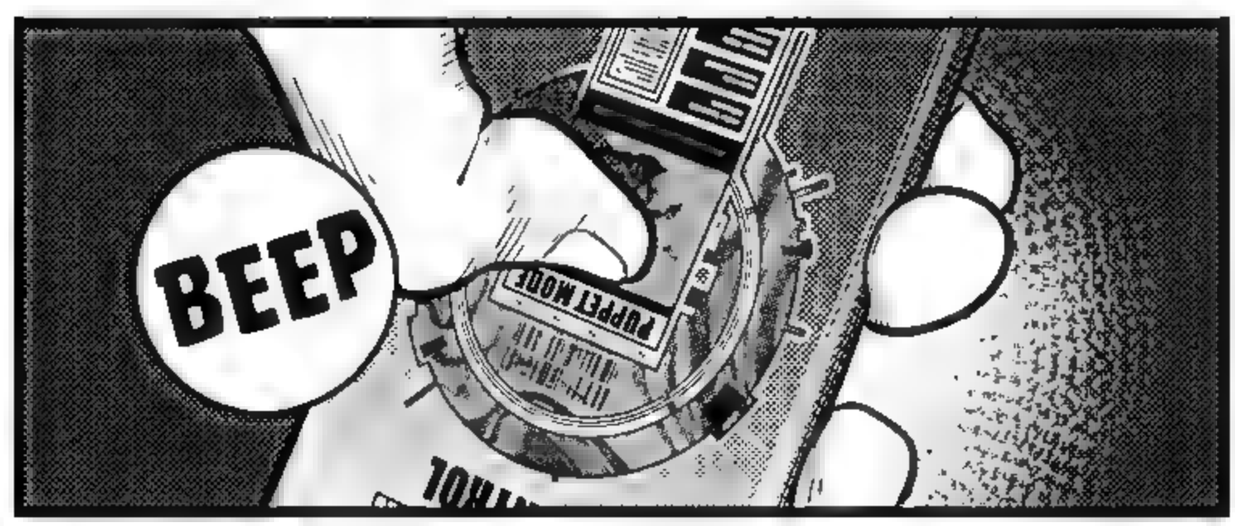
ズリ
ズリ
DRAG...
KOFF!
GUH ...

?!
WHUMP

NICE PROS-THETIC.
WOULDN'T HAPPEN TO BE A TYPE-29, WOULD IT?

BZZT

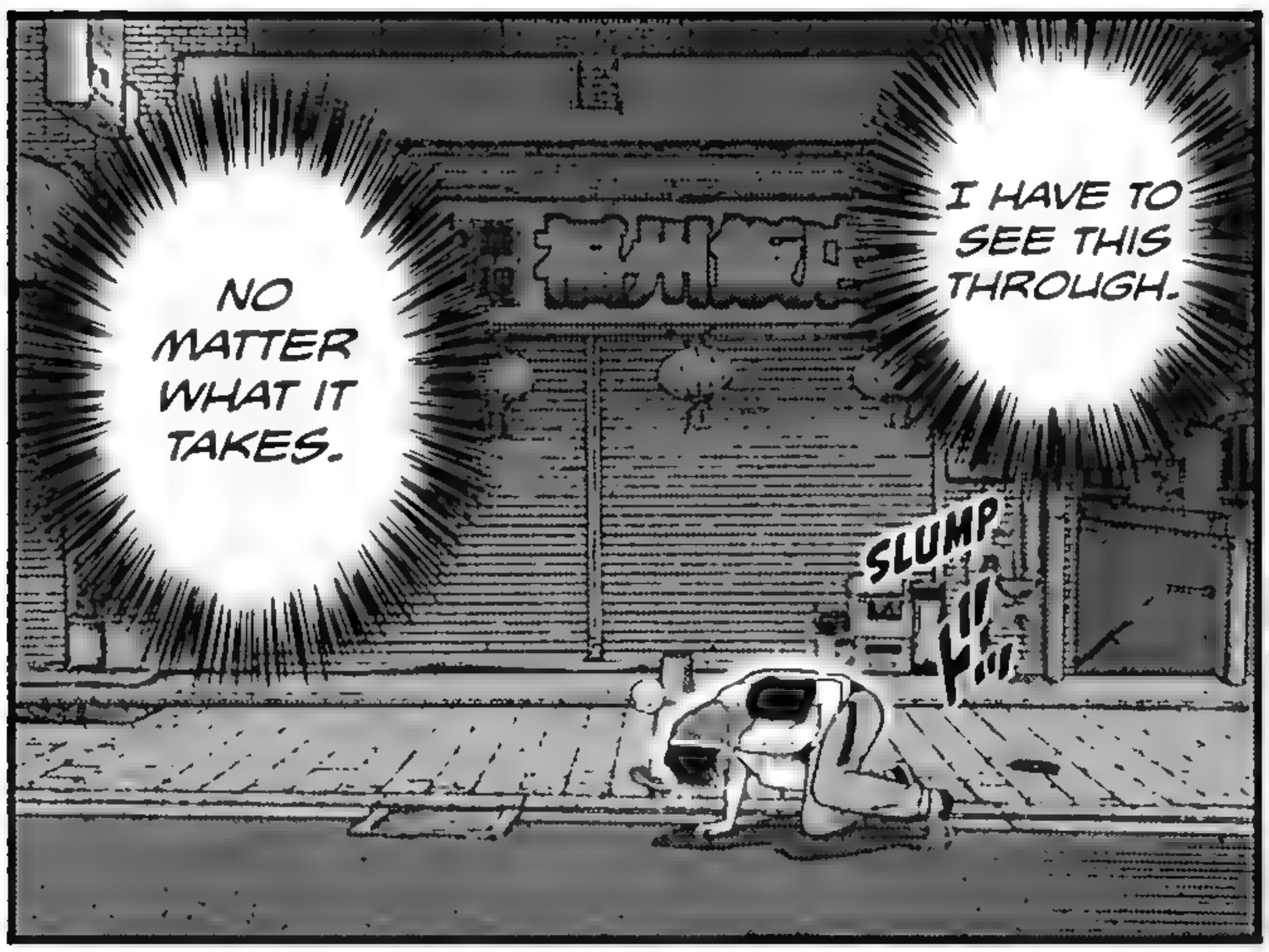
TIK
TIK
TIK
TIK
TIK


BEEP

WHAT ARE YOU–?
WHACK
HEY! STOP!
BAM
YRAAAH
WHACK

?!
GRRAAAAHH

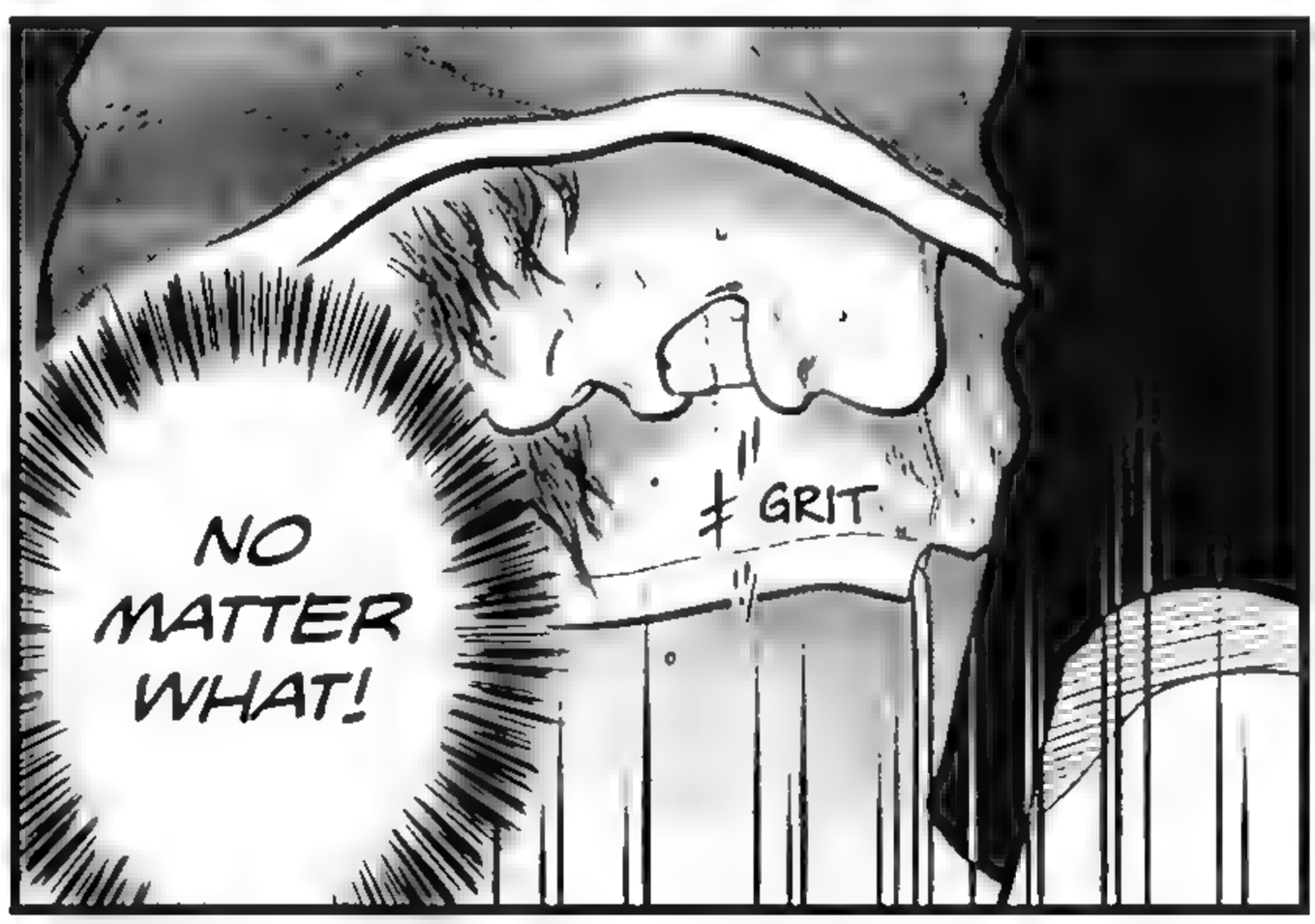
HFF...
HFF...


NO MATTER WHAT IT TAKES.
I HAVE TO SEE THIS THROUGH.
SLUMP

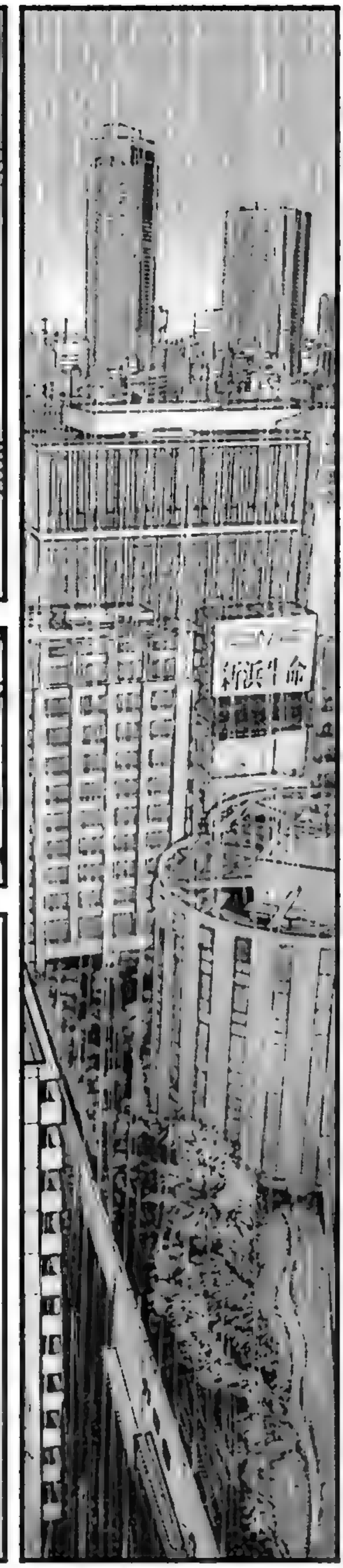
I HAVE TO...

...AND MARI...
FOR DAD...

!


NO MATTER WHAT!
GRIT

SIGNBOARD: 17TH FLOOR: OFFICES OF SHINRA MIKOMOTO



YOU NEED SOMEONE TO CLAIM THE BODY?

I'LL BE BY TO-MORROW.

I SEE... YES. YES, OF COURSE. IT'S NO TROUBLE.

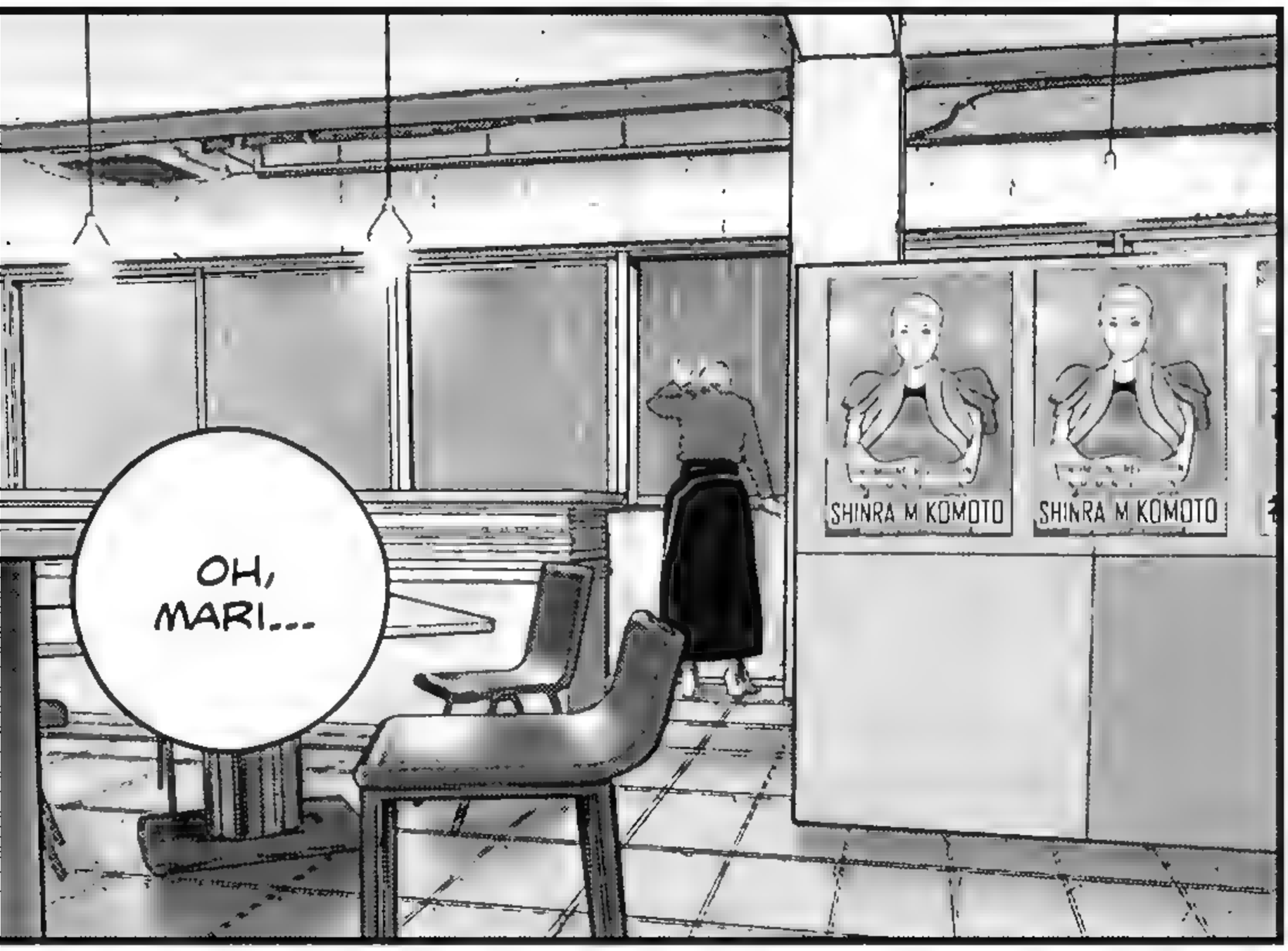
CLICK CLACK

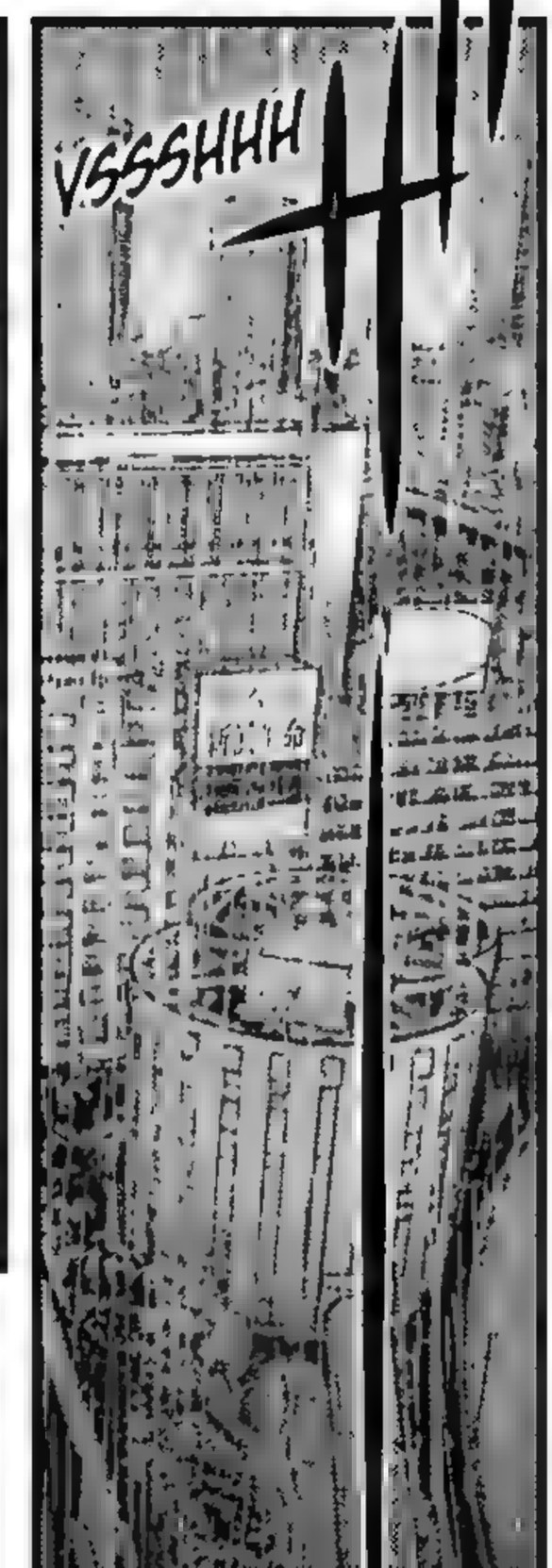
THANK YOU. GOOD-BYE.

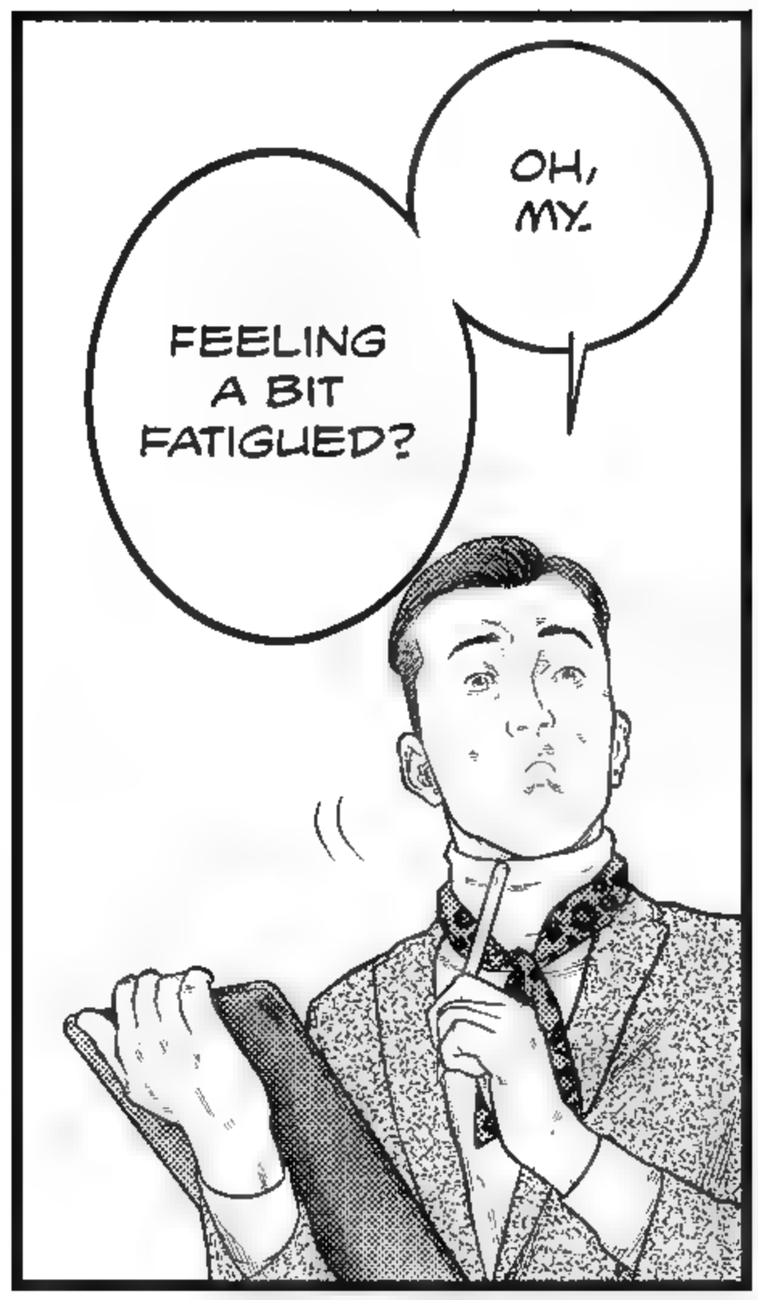
THAT'S CORRECT. MARI HASHIKAMI AND I ARE SISTERS BY BIRTH.

PROMISING REVOLUTION IN HUMAN EVOLUTION

SHINRA MIKOMOTO



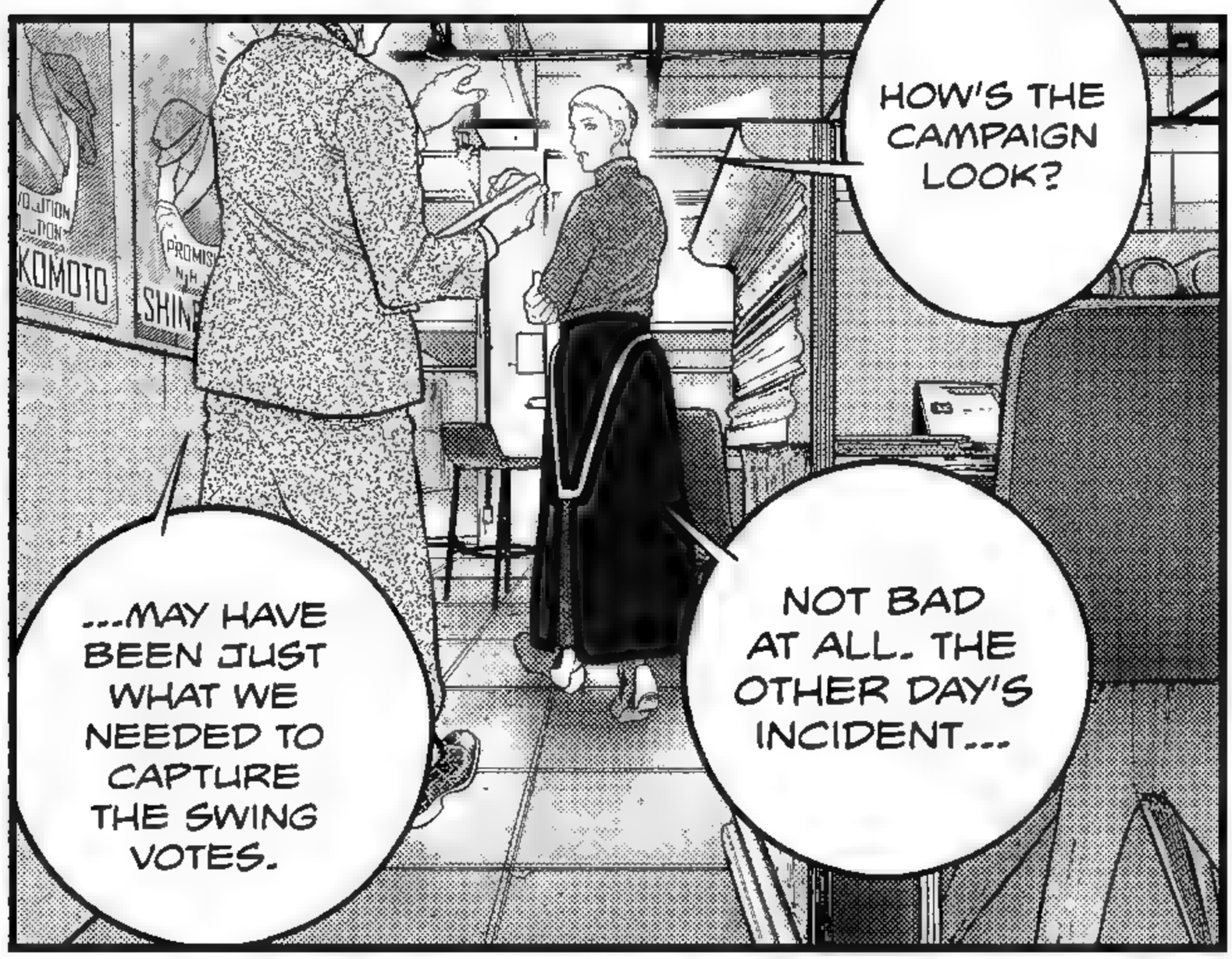



OH, MY.
FEELING A BIT FATIGUED?

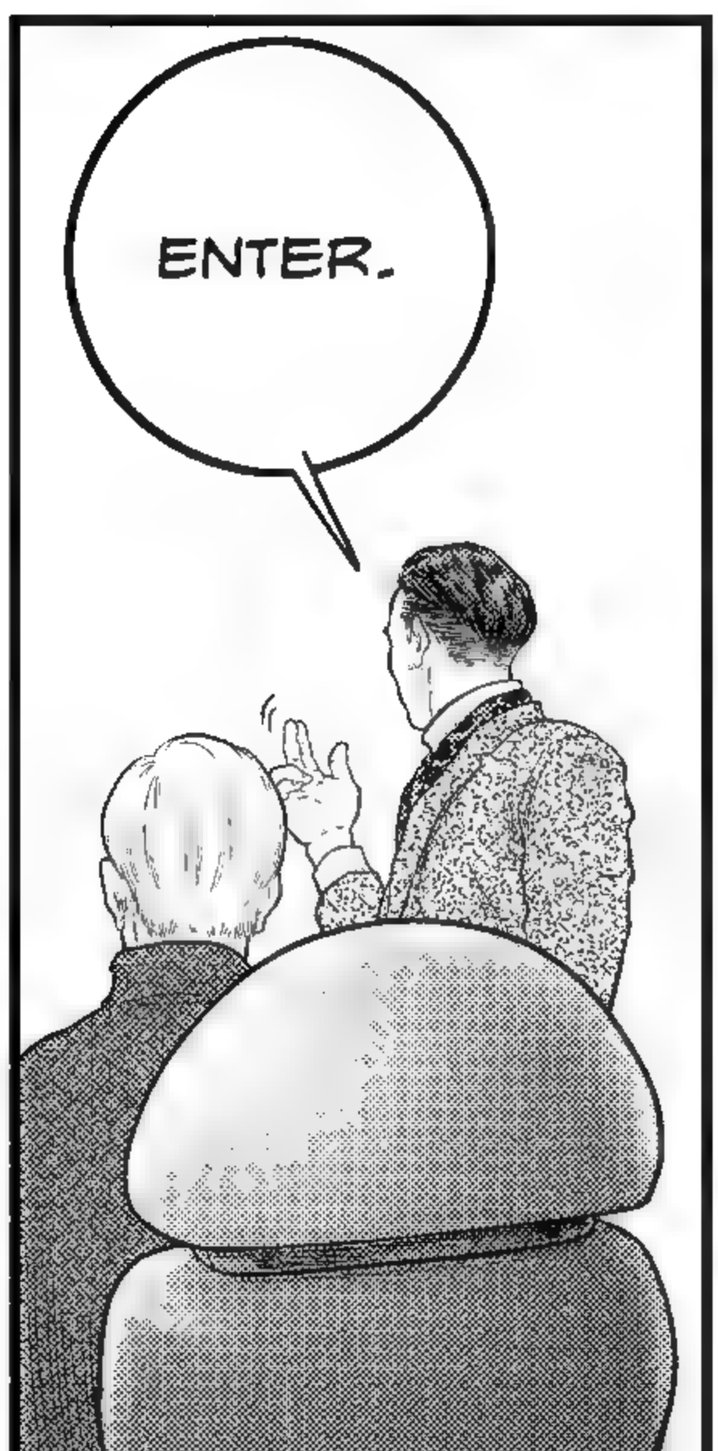
IT'S ALMOST TIME FOR YOUR NEXT ADDRESS. WE'LL NEED TO DEPART SOON IF WE'RE TO—
PARDON ME, COUN-CILOR.

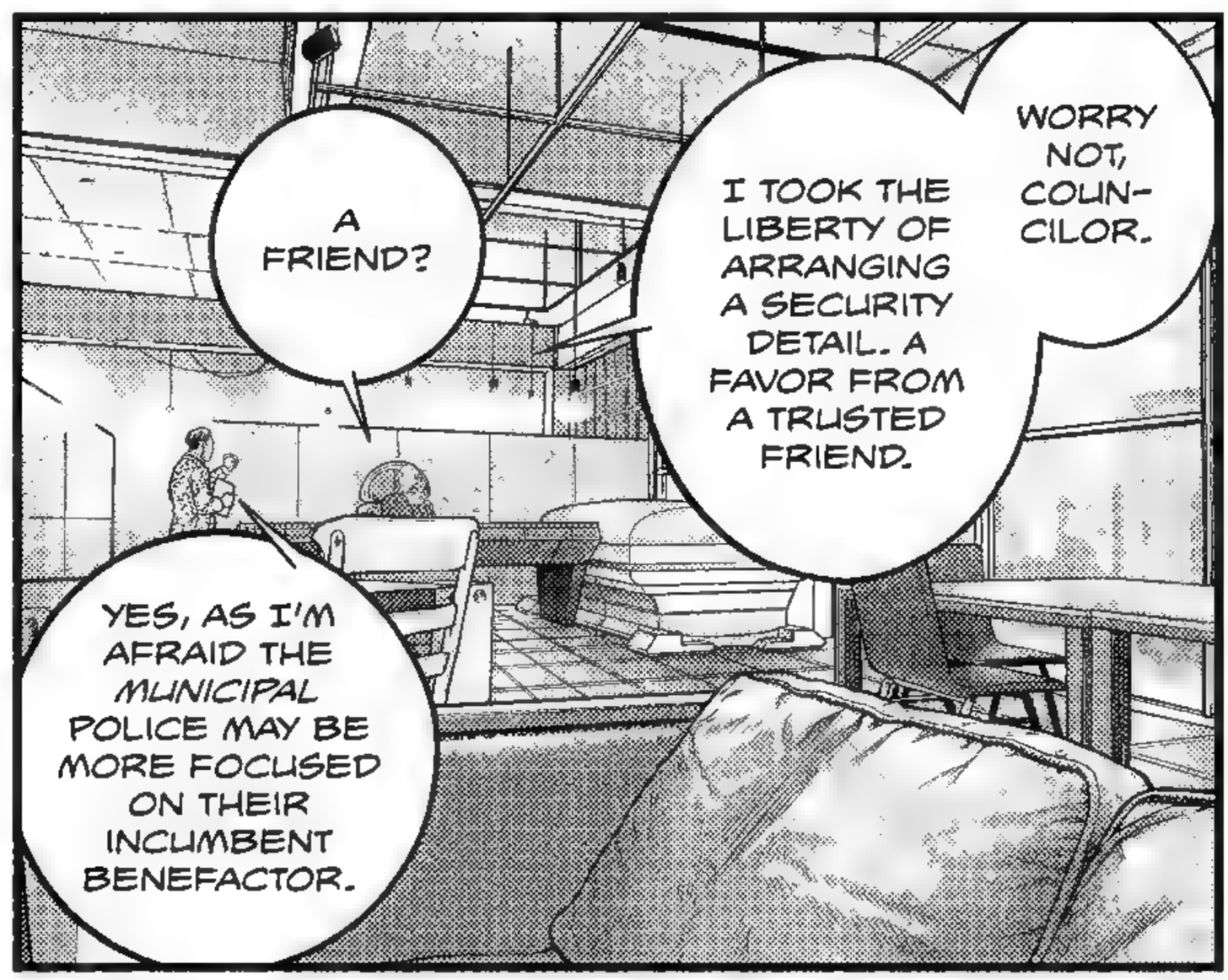
ME? NEVER.

A BLESSING IN DISGUISE, I'D SAY.


HOW'S THE CAMPAIGN LOOK?
...MAY HAVE BEEN JUST WHAT WE NEEDED TO CAPTURE THE SWING VOTES.
NOT BAD AT ALL. THE OTHER DAY'S INCIDENT...

...I'M STARTING TO WONDER IF I'LL END UP SITTING IN THE MAYOR'S SEAT OR LYING SIX FEET UNDER.
IF I'M A TARGET AT EVERY SPEECH I MAKE...
I REALLY HOPE THAT'S THE CASE.

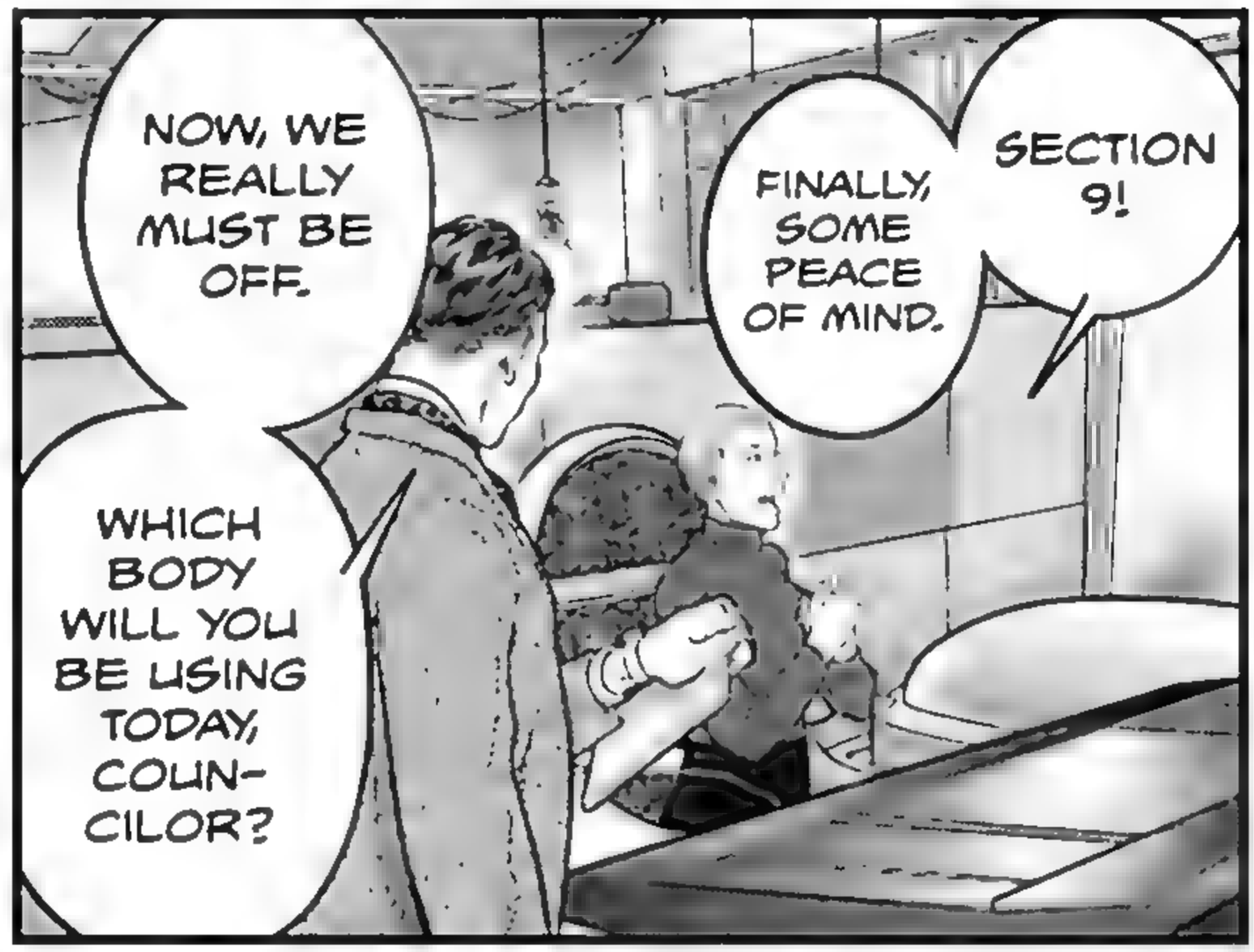

ENTER.

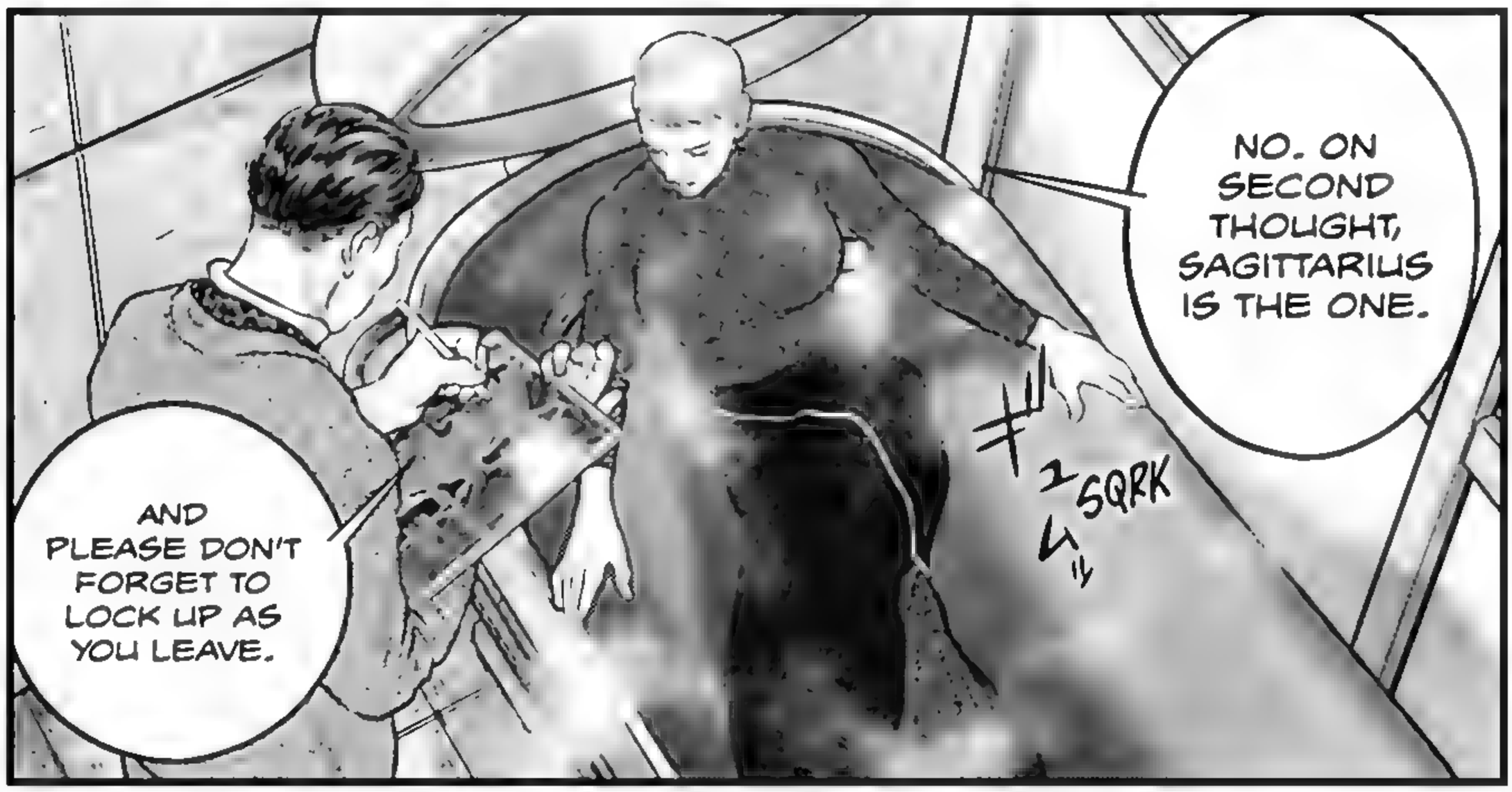

A FRIEND?
I TOOK THE LIBERTY OF ARRANGING A SECURITY DETAIL. A FAVOR FROM A TRUSTED FRIEND.
WORRY NOT, COUN-CILOR.
YES, AS I'M AFRAID THE MUNICIPAL POLICE MAY BE MORE FOCUSED ON THEIR INCUMBENT BENEFACTOR.

IT'S A PLEASURE TO SERVE, COUNCILOR.

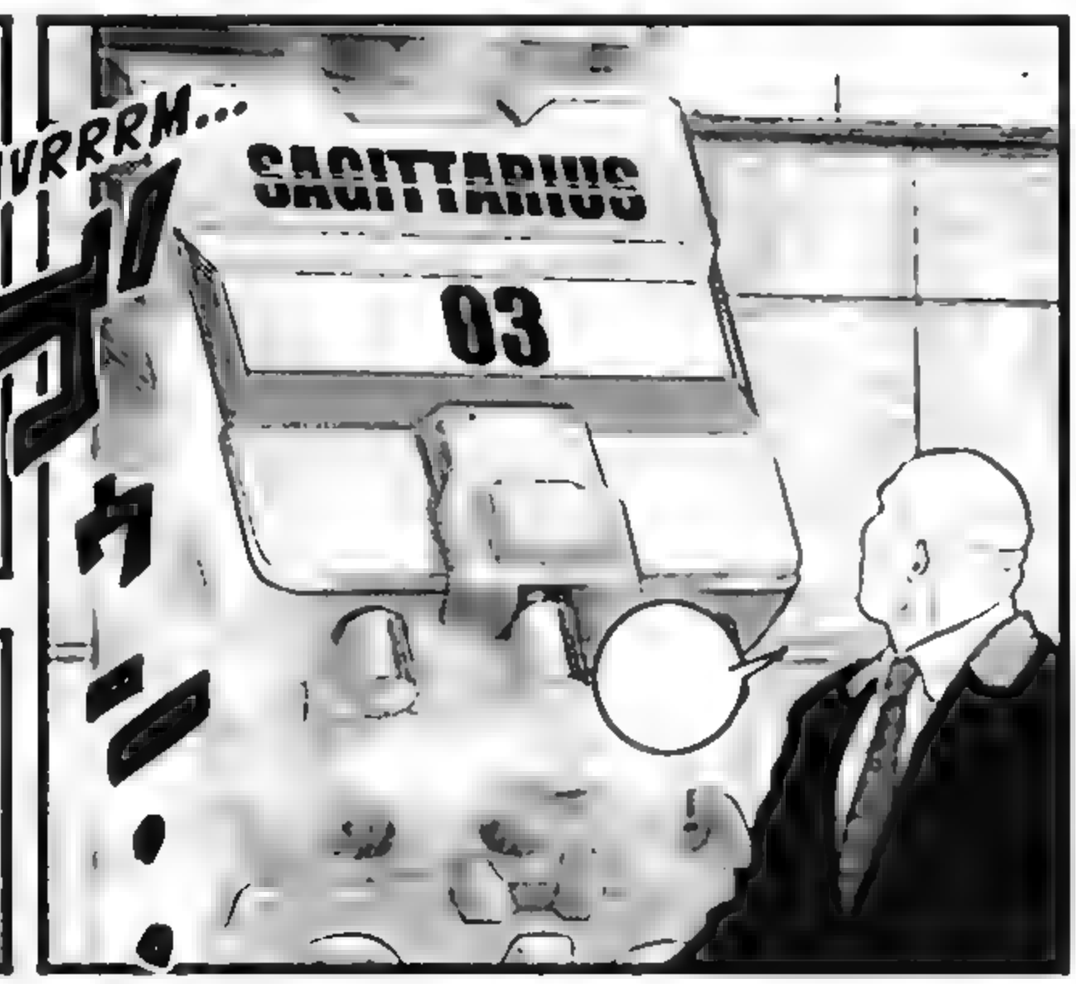
PUBLIC SECURITY SECTION 9, AGENTS PAZ AND BORMA, REPORTING FOR DUTY.

VRM
HMM. YES... GIVEN THE RAIN...
...LET'S GO WITH AQUARIUS.
PSHHH...


NOW, WE REALLY MUST BE OFF.
WHICH BODY WILL YOU BE USING TODAY, COUN-CILOR?
FINALLY, SOME PEACE OF MIND.
SECTION 9!


AND PLEASE DON'T FORGET TO LOCK UP AS YOU LEAVE.
NO. ON SECOND THOUGHT, SAGITTARIUS IS THE ONE.
SQRK

CLACK


KAVRRRM...
SAGITTARIUS
03

LET US BE ON OUR WAY.

SPLENDID.

CLICK

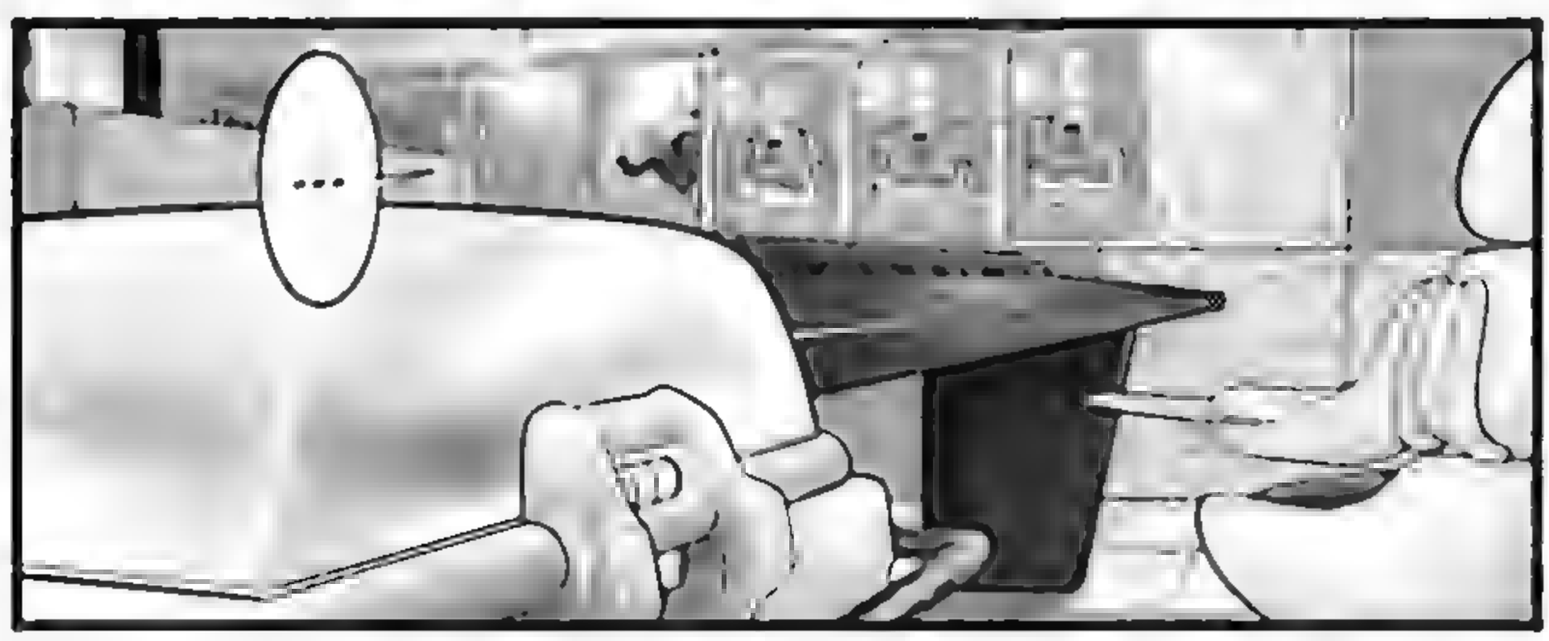
WHAT'S THE POINT OF STICKING BODYGUARDS ON A *REMOTE*?

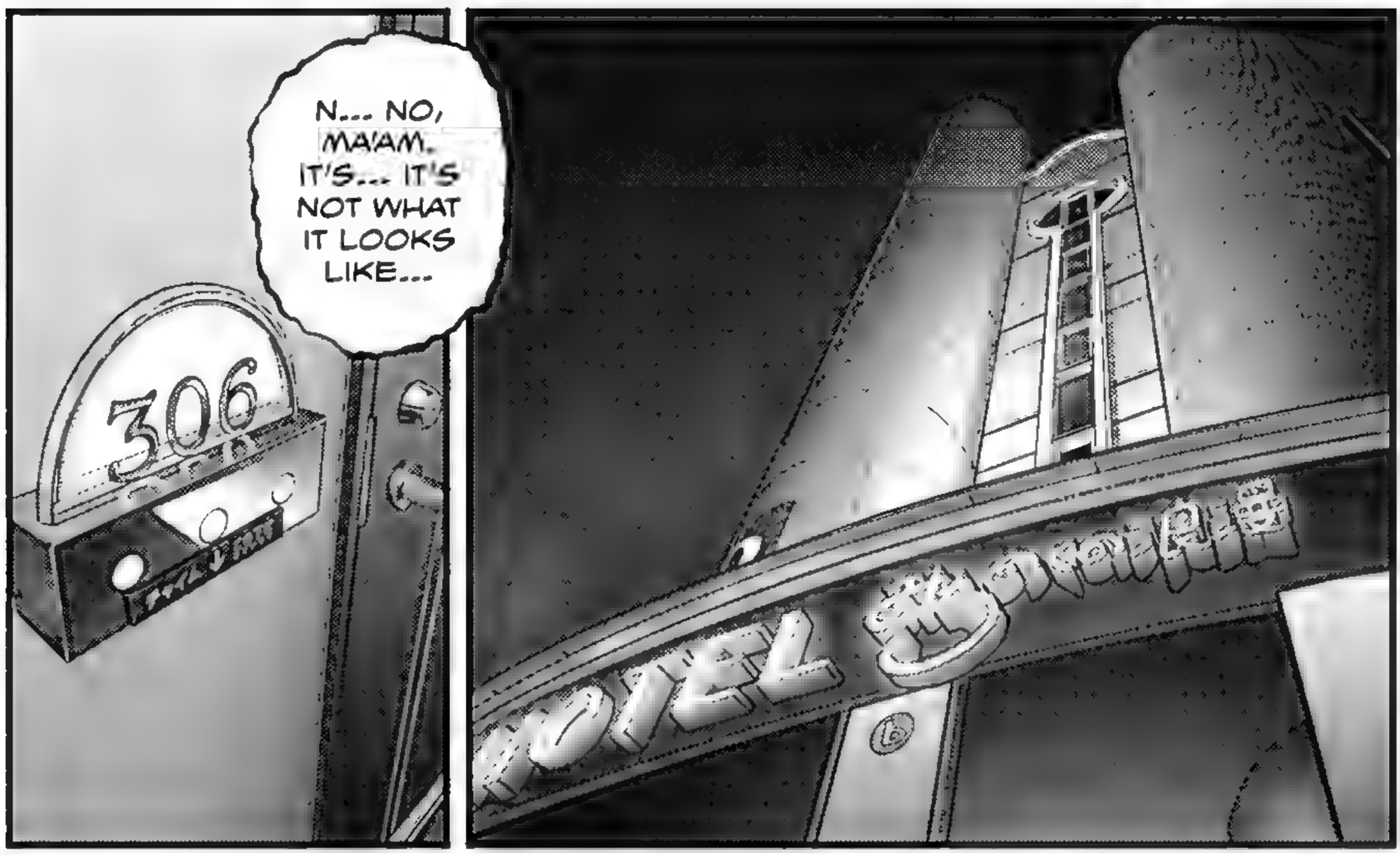
HEY, PAZ.

WHAT, YOU THINKIN' OF RUNNIN' FOR OFFICE?

POLITICAL LIFE SURE IS TOUGH.

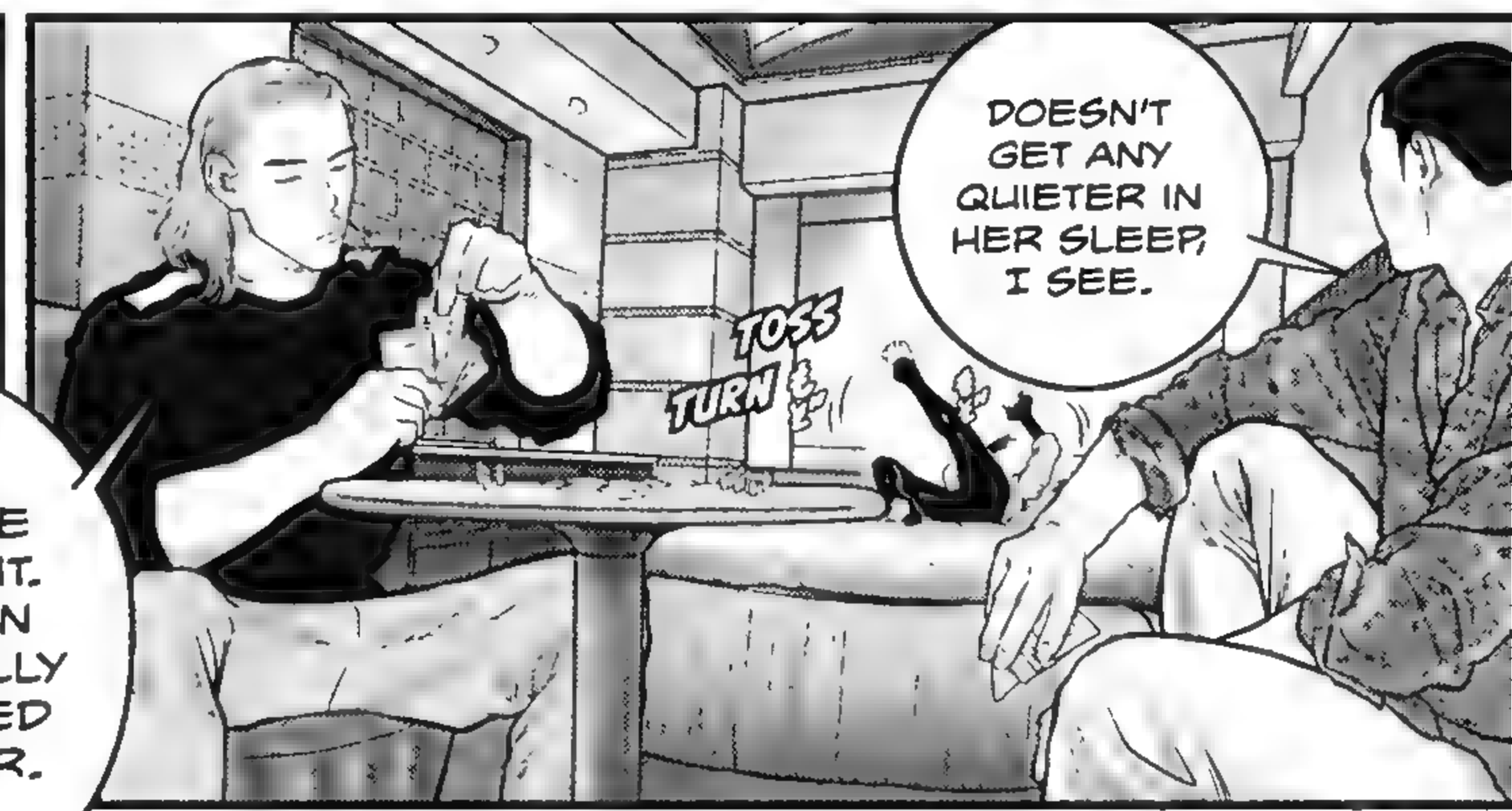
EVENTU-ALLY.

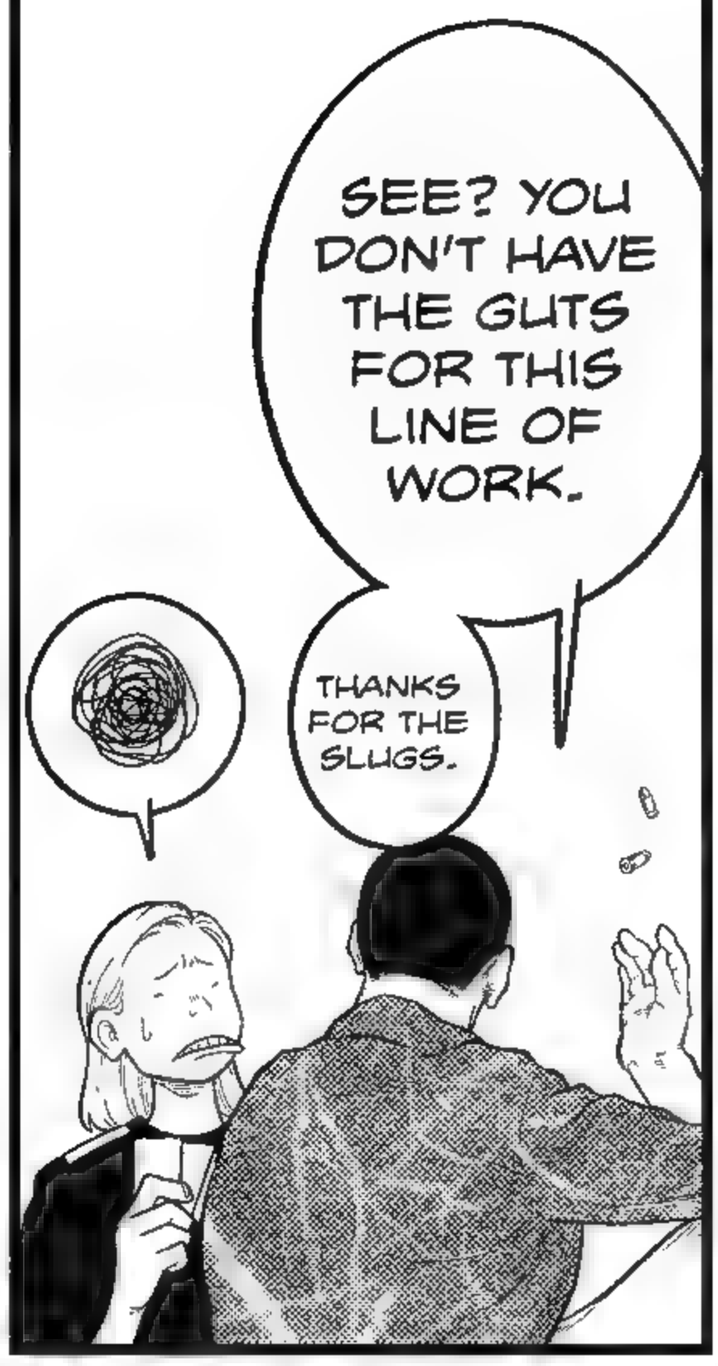


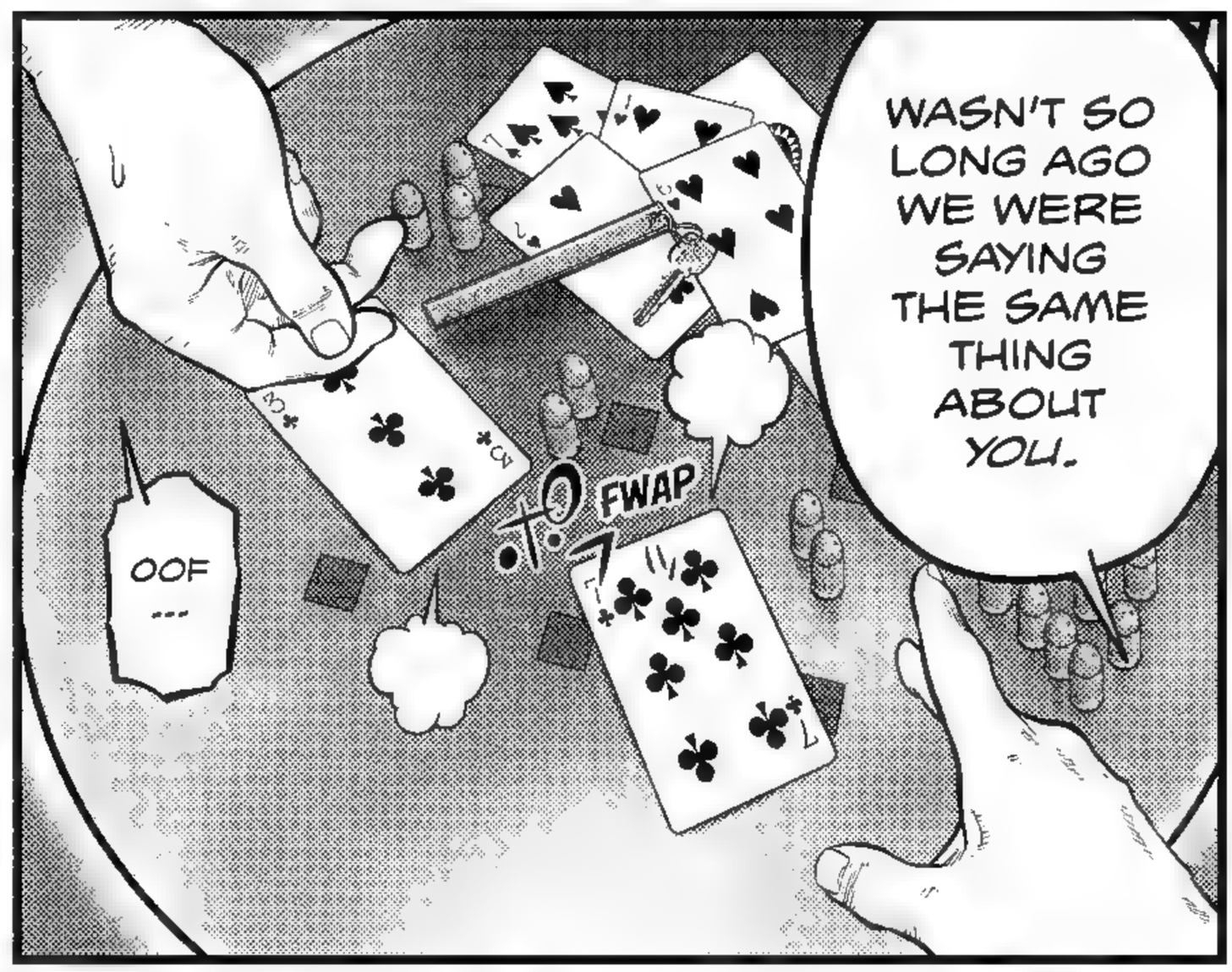

N... NO, MA'AM. IT'S... IT'S NOT WHAT IT LOOKS LIKE...
306
HOTEL

HONEST. I DON'T HAVE ANY ULTERIOR–
THE RELATION-SHIP'S JUST A COVER STORY.

NGHHH...
TELL ME ABOUT IT. SECTION 9'S REALLY LOWERED THE BAR.


TOSS
TURN
DOESN'T GET ANY QUIETER IN HER SLEEP, I SEE.


SEE? YOU DON'T HAVE THE GUTS FOR THIS LINE OF WORK.
THANKS FOR THE SLUGS.


WASN'T SO LONG AGO WE WERE SAYING THE SAME THING ABOUT YOU.
OOF ...
FWAP

PUT DOWN THE MATEBA! THIS ISN'T—
WAIT! PLEASE, MA'AM!
SP-
RING

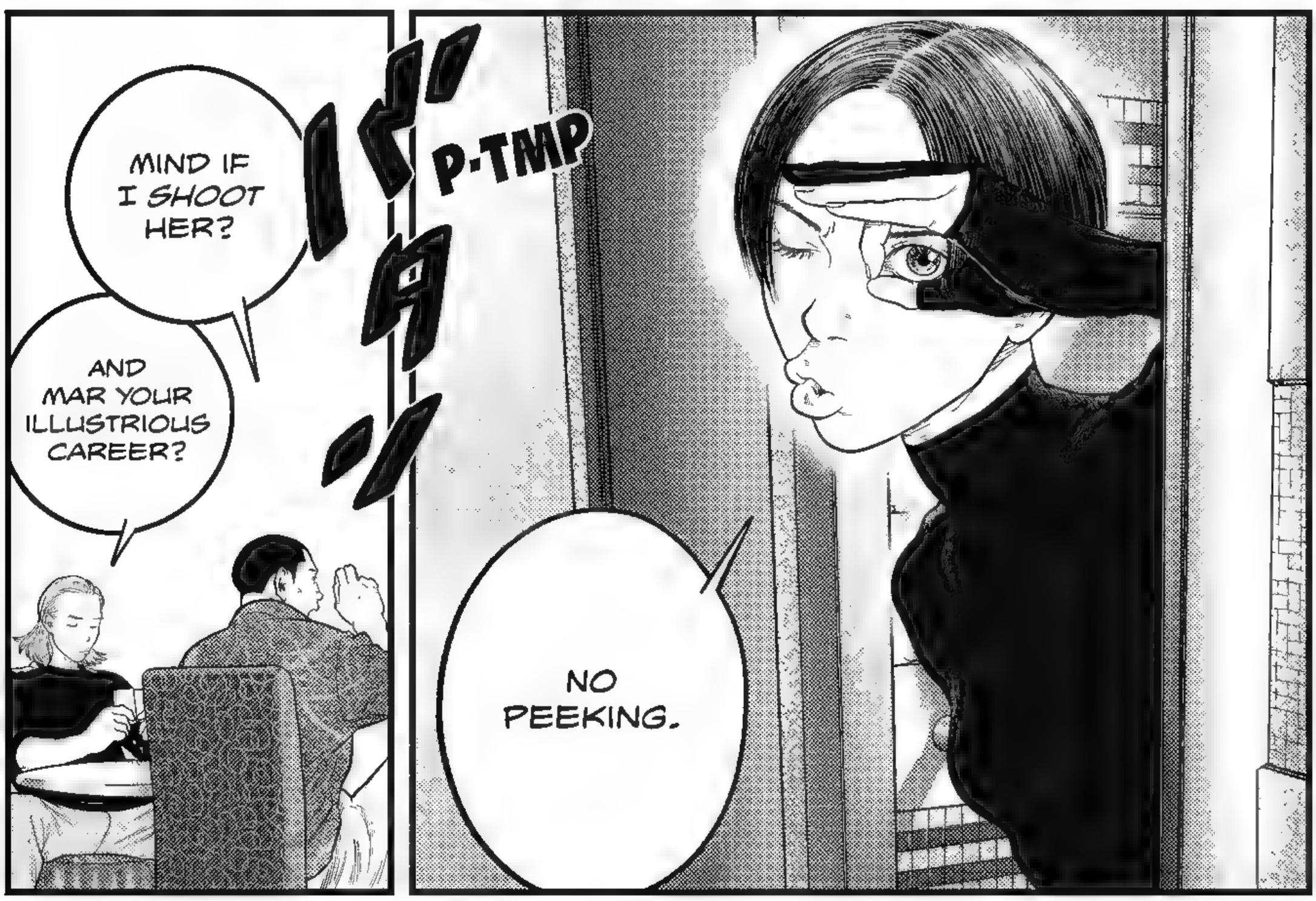
HEY, UM...
WE MOVE ON ATERUI IN 13 MINUTES, 45 SECONDS.
YOU'RE AWAKE. FINALLY.

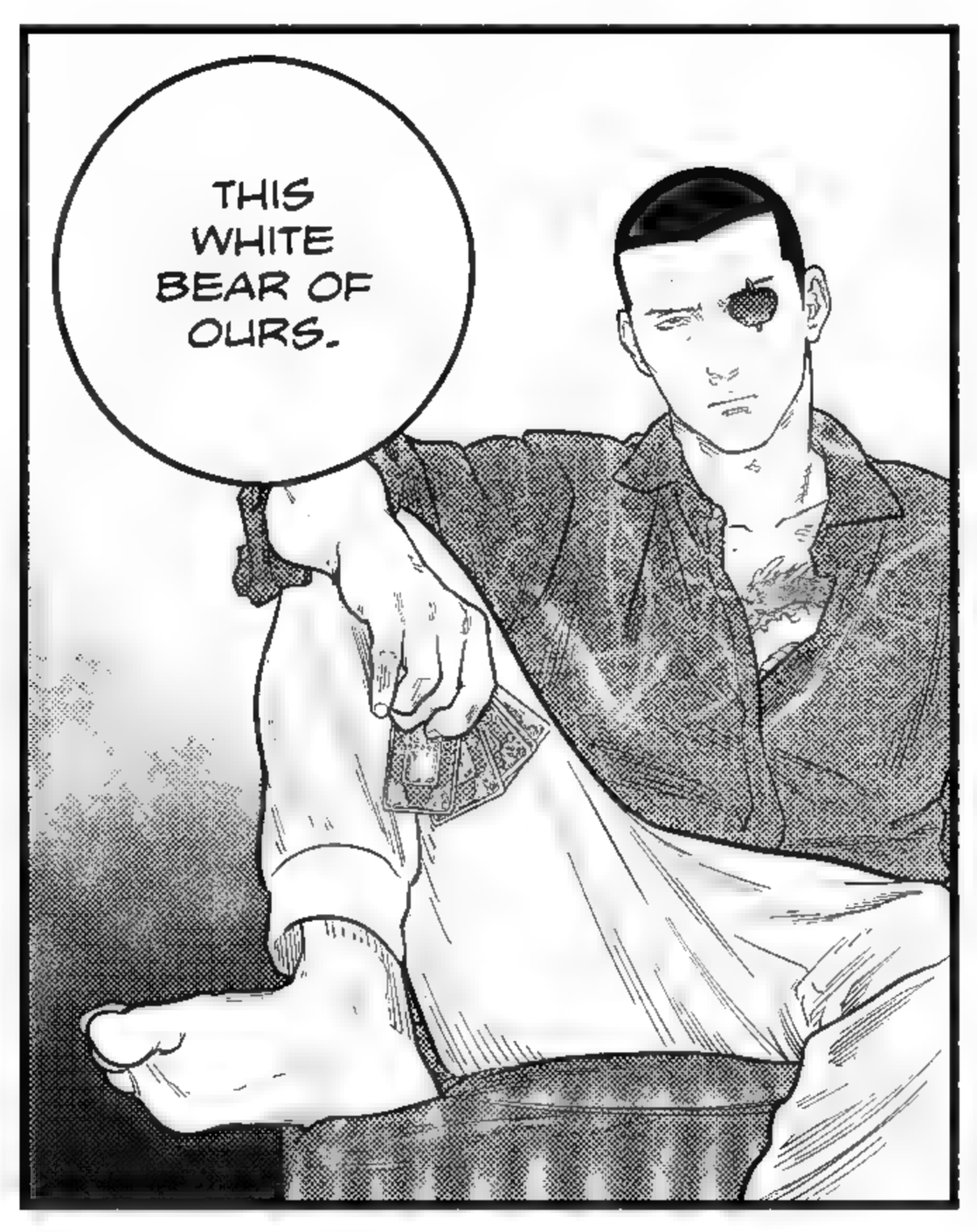
...I WASN'T TALKING IN MY SLEEP, WAS I?

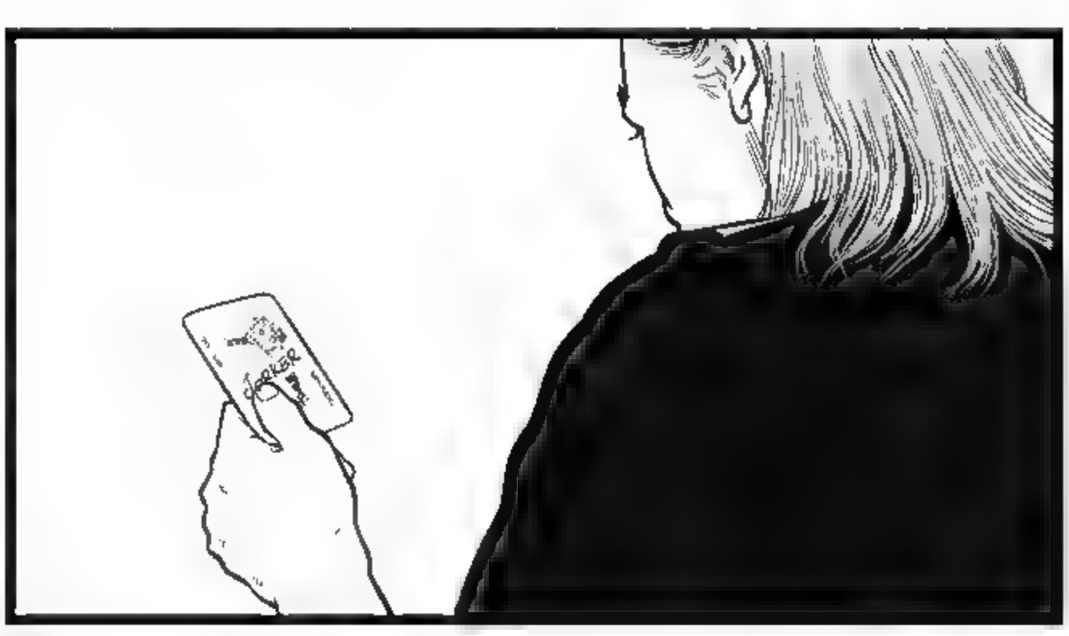
SO YOU DID HEAR ME!
FWAP
SHP

NGRK!
YOU HEARD HIM. AND BE SURE TO TEND TO THOSE MATEBA WOUNDS.
SAVE IT. HURRY AND GEAR UP.

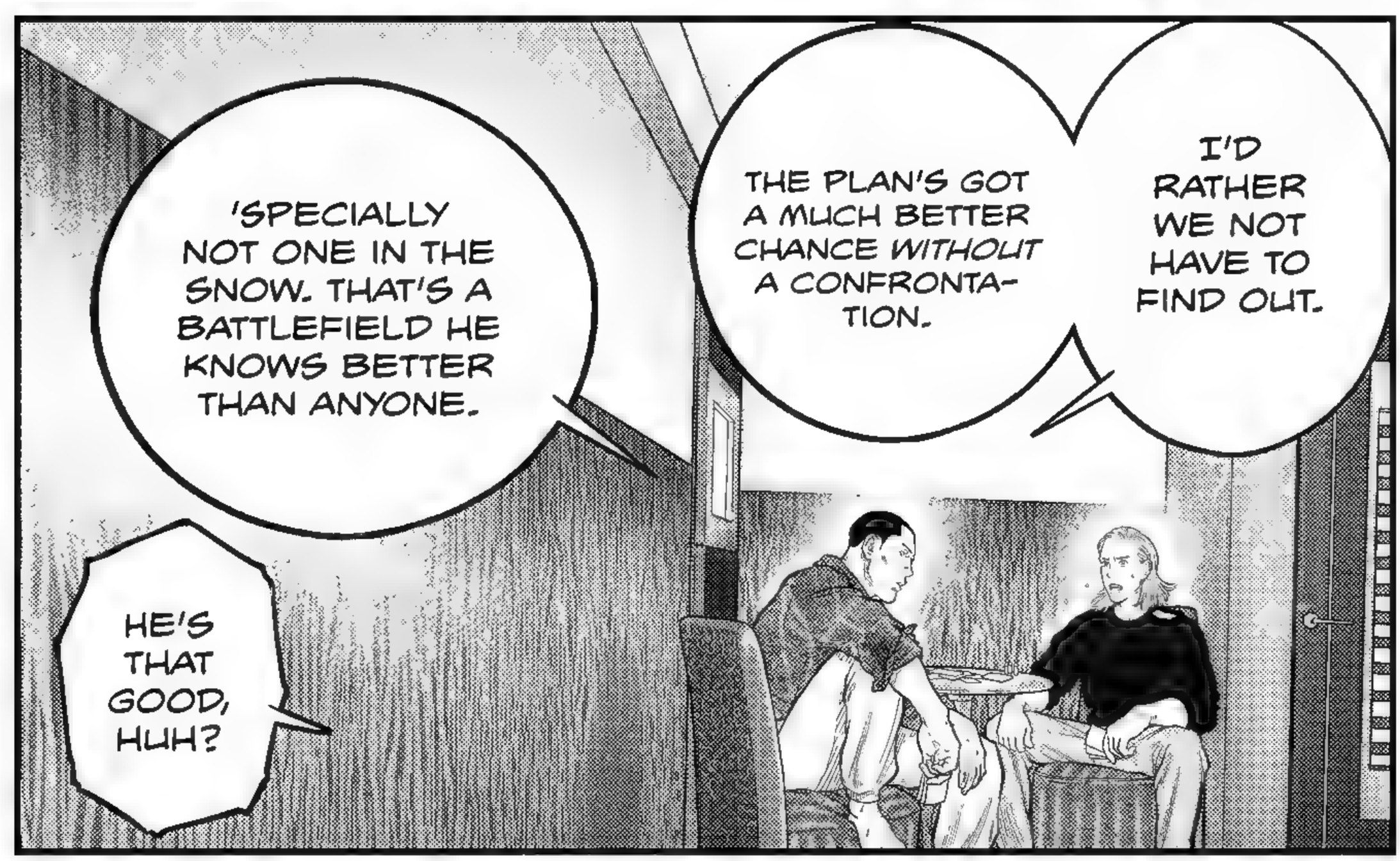
OH, AND MR. SNIPER?

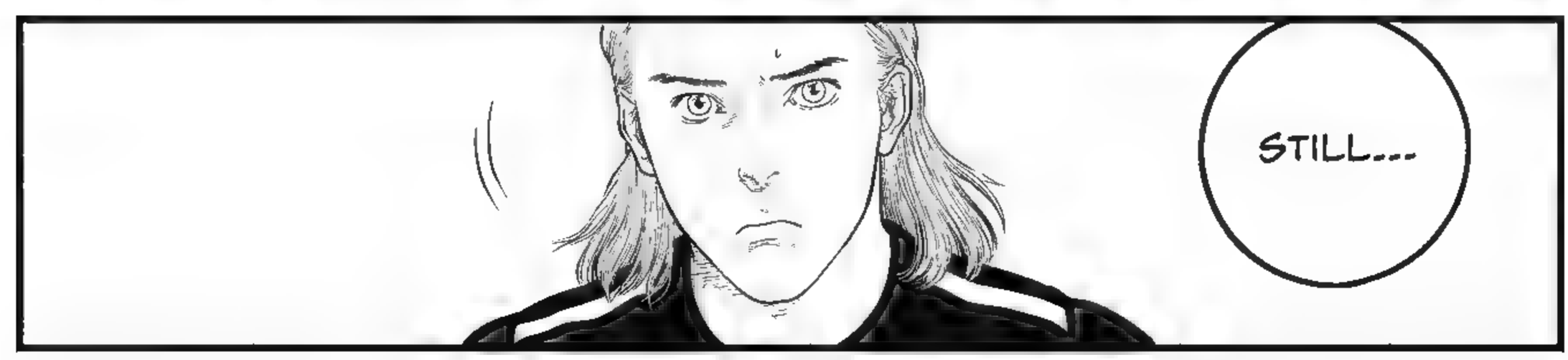

WHY'S SHE AIMING AT ME...?
PIT
PAT
PIT
MIND IF I SHOOT HER?
AND MAR YOUR ILLUSTRIOUS CAREER?
P-TMP
NO PEEKING.


THIS WHITE BEAR OF OURS.

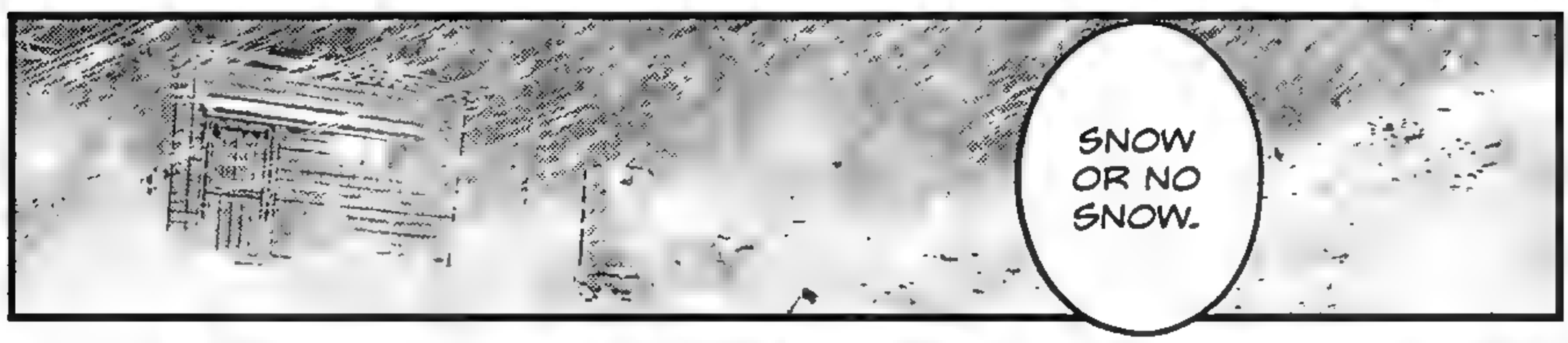


GIVE IT TO ME STRAIGHT, SAITO.
DO YOU THINK WE CAN BEAT HIM?
JOKER


'SPECIALLY NOT ONE IN THE SNOW. THAT'S A BATTLEFIELD HE KNOWS BETTER THAN ANYONE.
HE'S THAT GOOD, HUH?
THE PLAN'S GOT A MUCH BETTER CHANCE *WITHOUT* A CONFRONTATION.
I'D RATHER WE NOT HAVE TO FIND OUT.


STILL...

...IF PUSH COMES TO SHOVE, THERE ISN'T A BEAR IN THE WORLD THAT CAN HIDE FROM MY HAWKEYE.

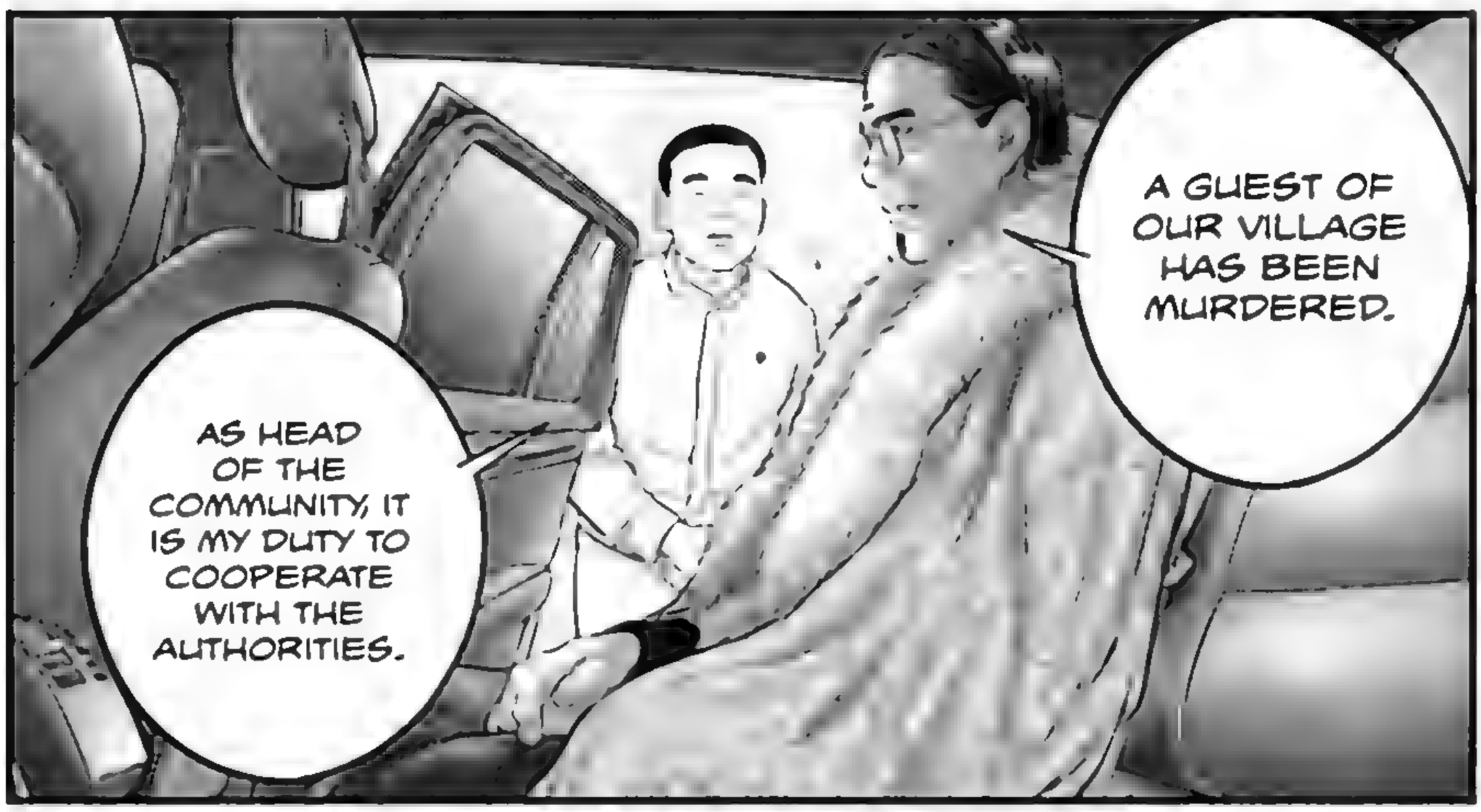

SNOW OR NO SNOW.

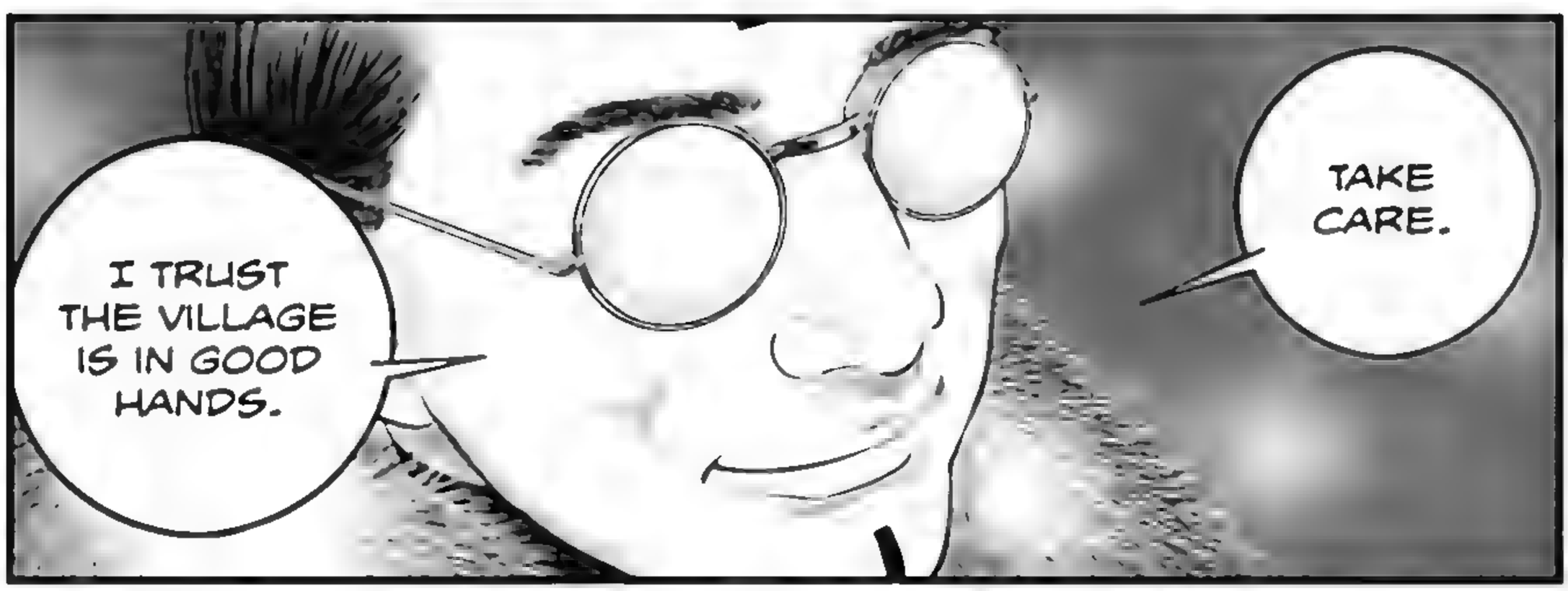
06

NO MASTER NO LIFE

SURELY YOU NEEDN'T MAKE THE STATEMENT YOURSELF. I WOULD BE ALL TOO HAPPY TO—
...

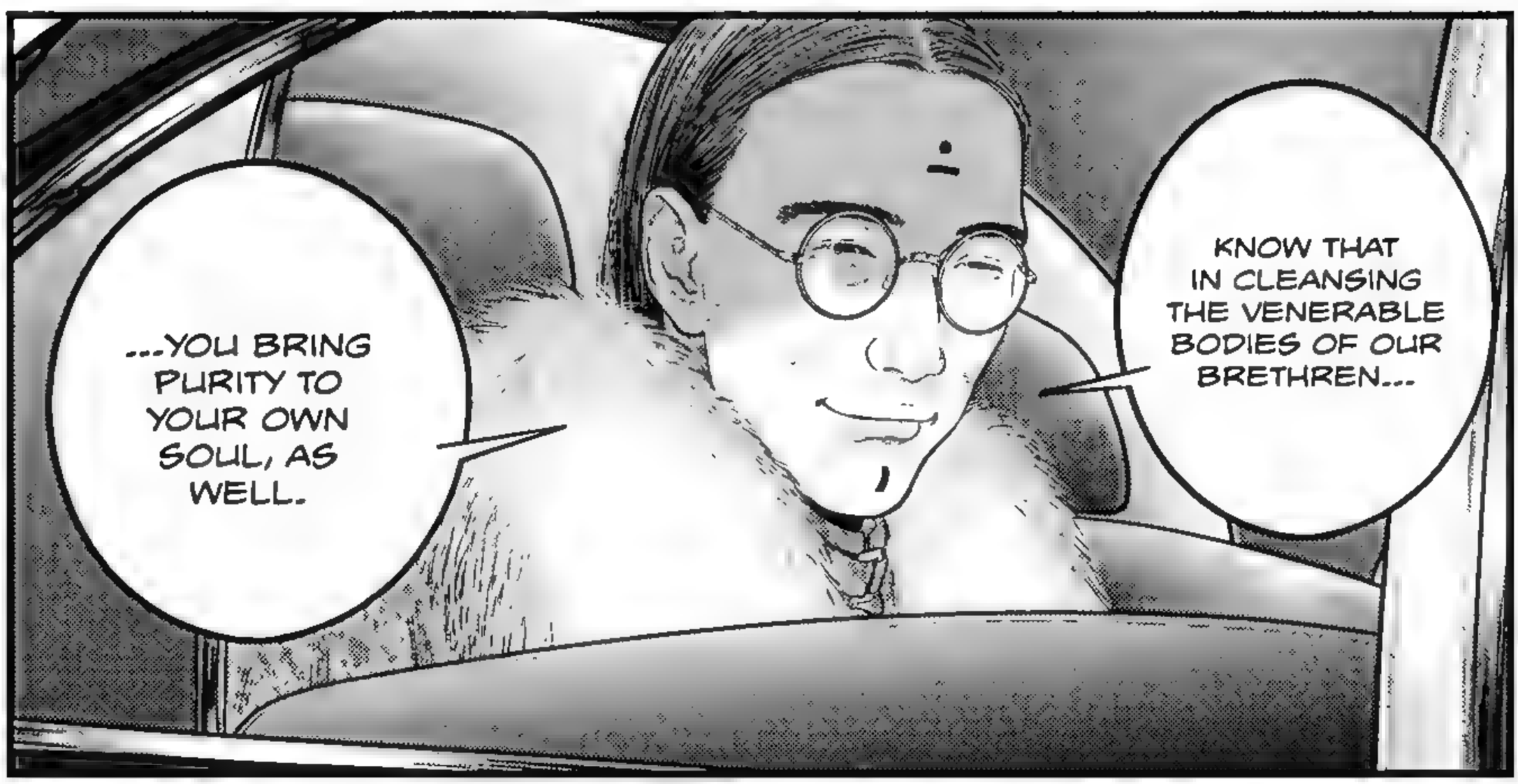
NOT UNTIL TOMORROW, I SUPPOSE.
WHEN MIGHT WE EXPECT YOU BACK, OFFICIANT?

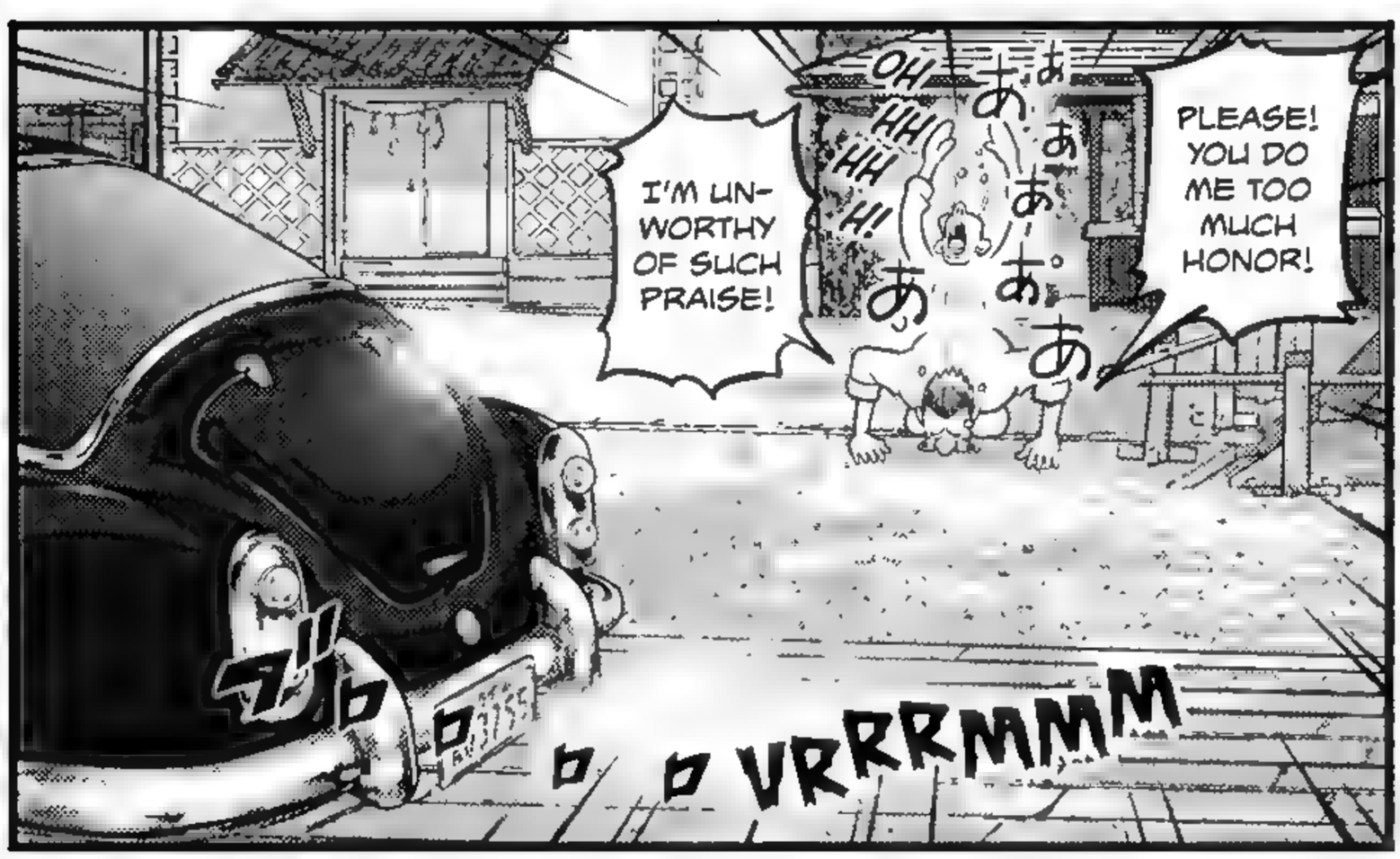

AS HEAD OF THE COMMUNITY, IT IS MY DUTY TO COOPERATE WITH THE AUTHORITIES.
A GUEST OF OUR VILLAGE HAS BEEN MURDERED.


I TRUST THE VILLAGE IS IN GOOD HANDS.
TAKE CARE.

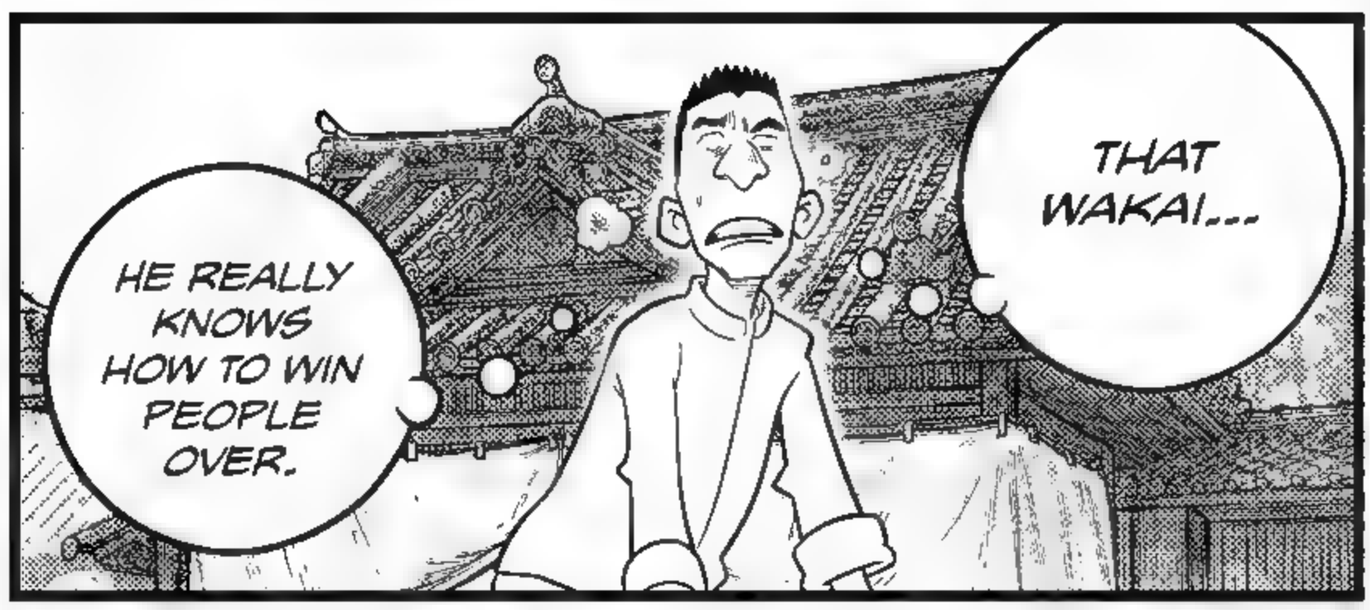
BZZZZZ
MAY THY SOUL BE PURE!
BZZZZZ
HRAH !
MAY THY SOUL ---
...BE PURE!
HRN-GH!
FWISH
FWISH

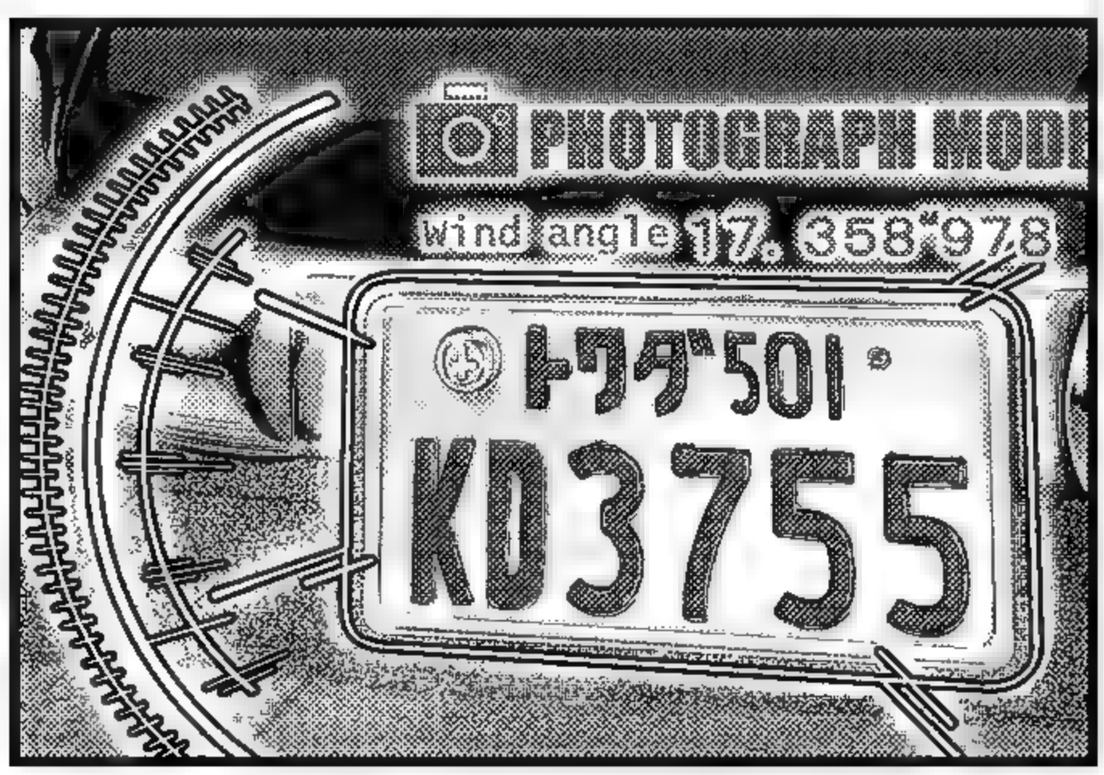
SUCH ZEAL. WHAT A TRULY SPLENDID DISPLAY.
?!


...YOU BRING PURITY TO YOUR OWN SOUL, AS WELL.
KNOW THAT IN CLEANSING THE VENERABLE BODIES OF OUR BRETHREN...

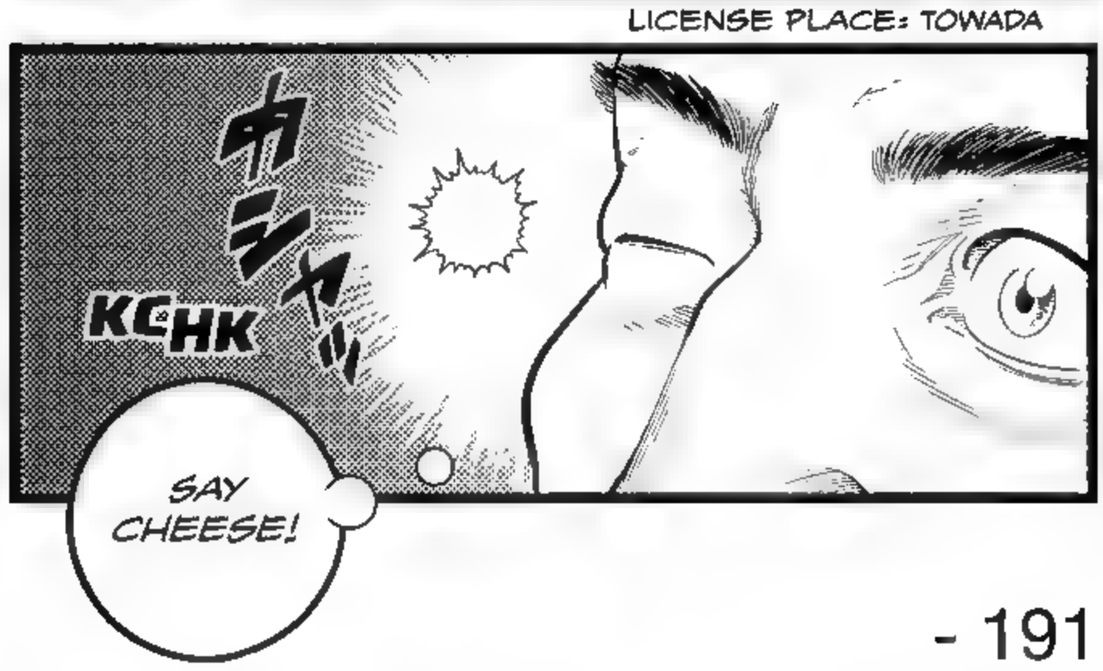

I'M UN-WORTHY OF SUCH PRAISE!
OH HH HH H!
あ あ あ あ あ
PLEASE! YOU DO ME TOO MUCH HONOR!
VRRRMMM

QUIVER
ゆ ゆ ゆ ゆ ゆ ゆ
QUIVER
QUIVER

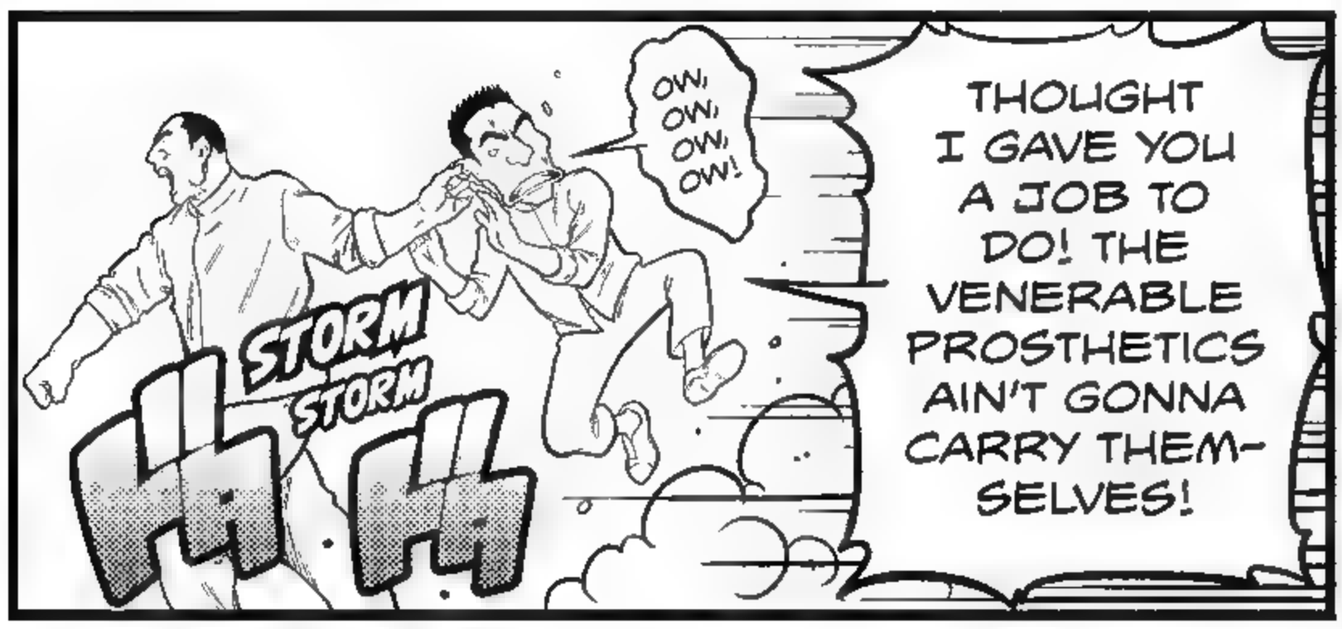




LICENSE PLACE: TOWADA

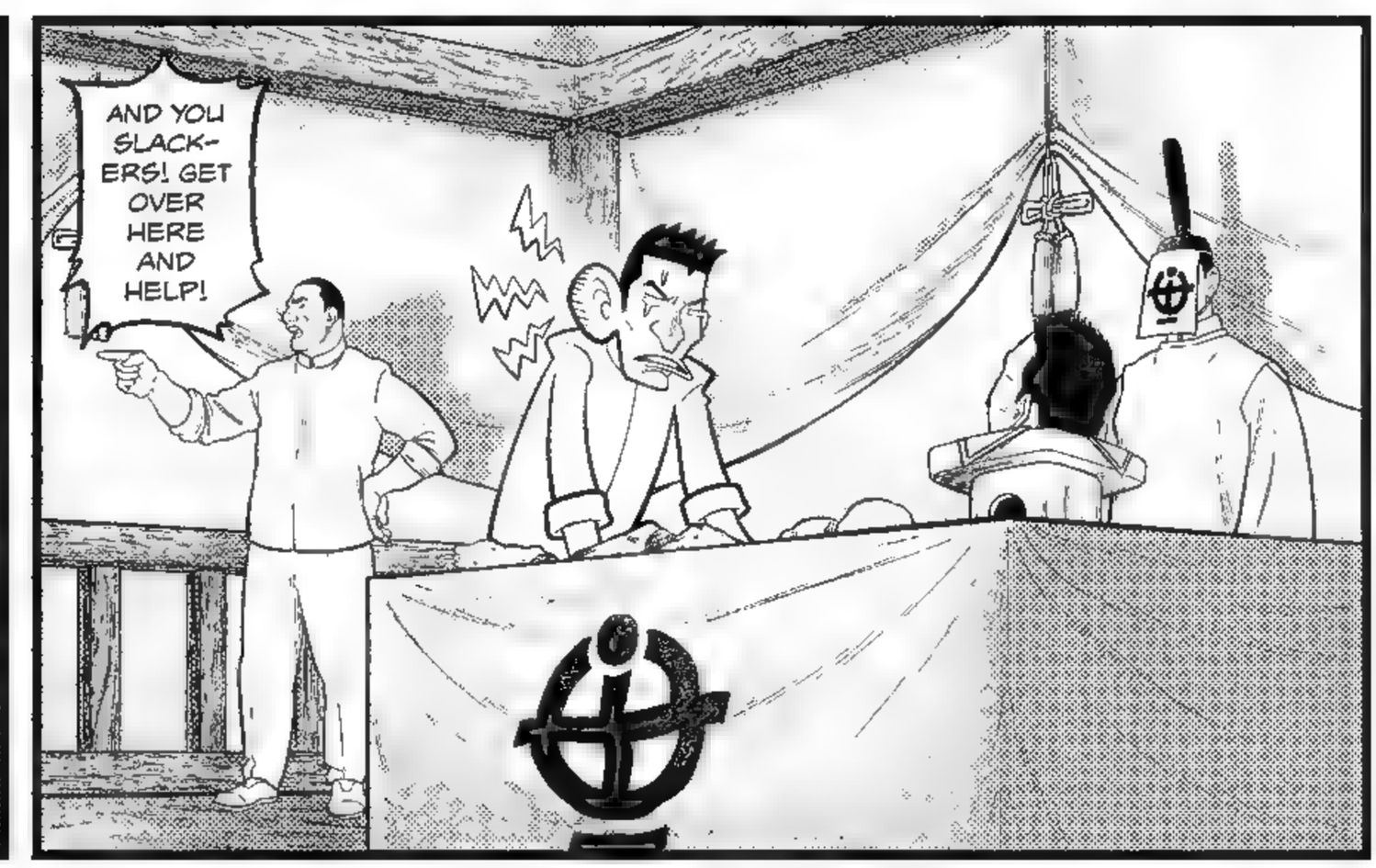


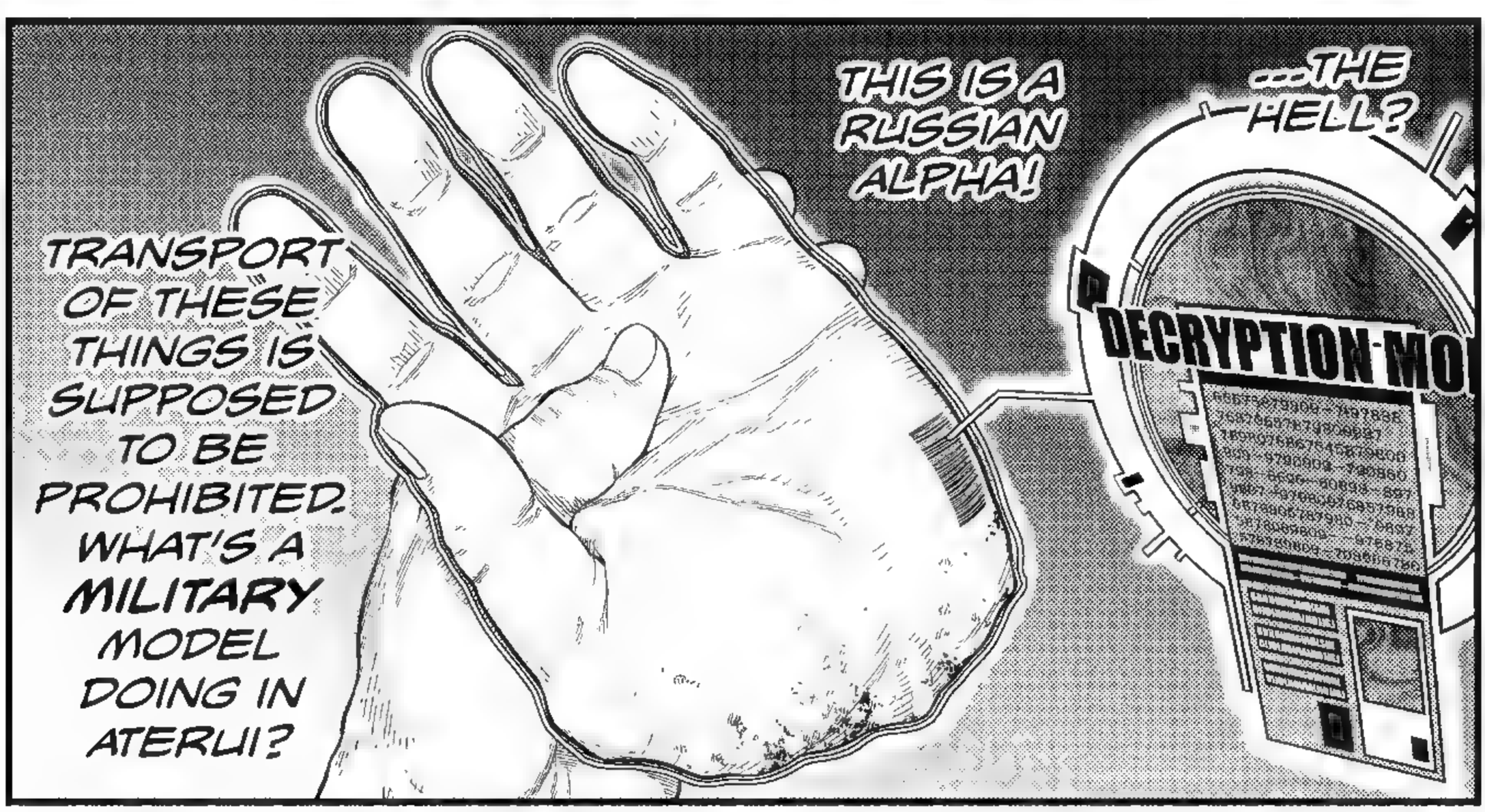
EEP!
HEY! NEW GUY!


OW, OW, OW, OW!
STORM STORM
THOUGHT I GAVE YOU A JOB TO DO! THE VENERABLE PROSTHETICS AIN'T GONNA CARRY THEM-SELVES!

WON'T BE ABLE TO SEND THE PHOTO, THOUGH.
=非接続地区=
INCONNECTED AREA
I'LL JUST HAVE TO HANG ONTO IT FOR NOW.

?!


AND YOU SLACK-ERS! GET OVER HERE AND HELP!


THIS IS A RUSSIAN ALPHA!
...THE HELL?
TRANSPORT OF THESE THINGS IS SUPPOSED TO BE PROHIBITED. WHAT'S A MILITARY MODEL DOING IN ATERUI?
DECRYPTION MO

THERE'S A LOT MORE GOING ON HERE THAN I WOULD'VE GUESSED...

KRNCH
KRNCH
SST
CHECK YOUR TERRAIN DATA AND TARGET IMAGERY.
PAST THIS POINT, WE'LL BE BEHIND THE COM-MUNICATIONS BARRIER.
MAKE SURE THEY'RE SET FOR OFFLINE ACCESS.

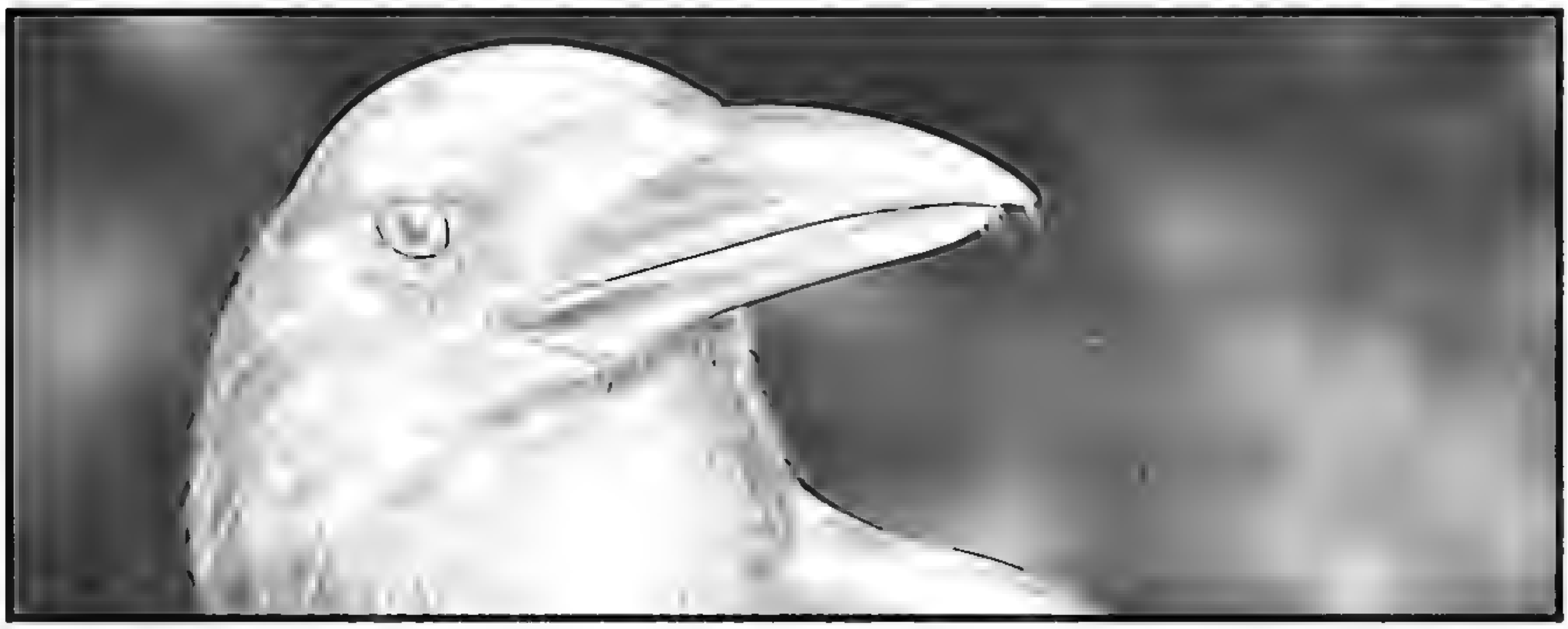
VMMM...

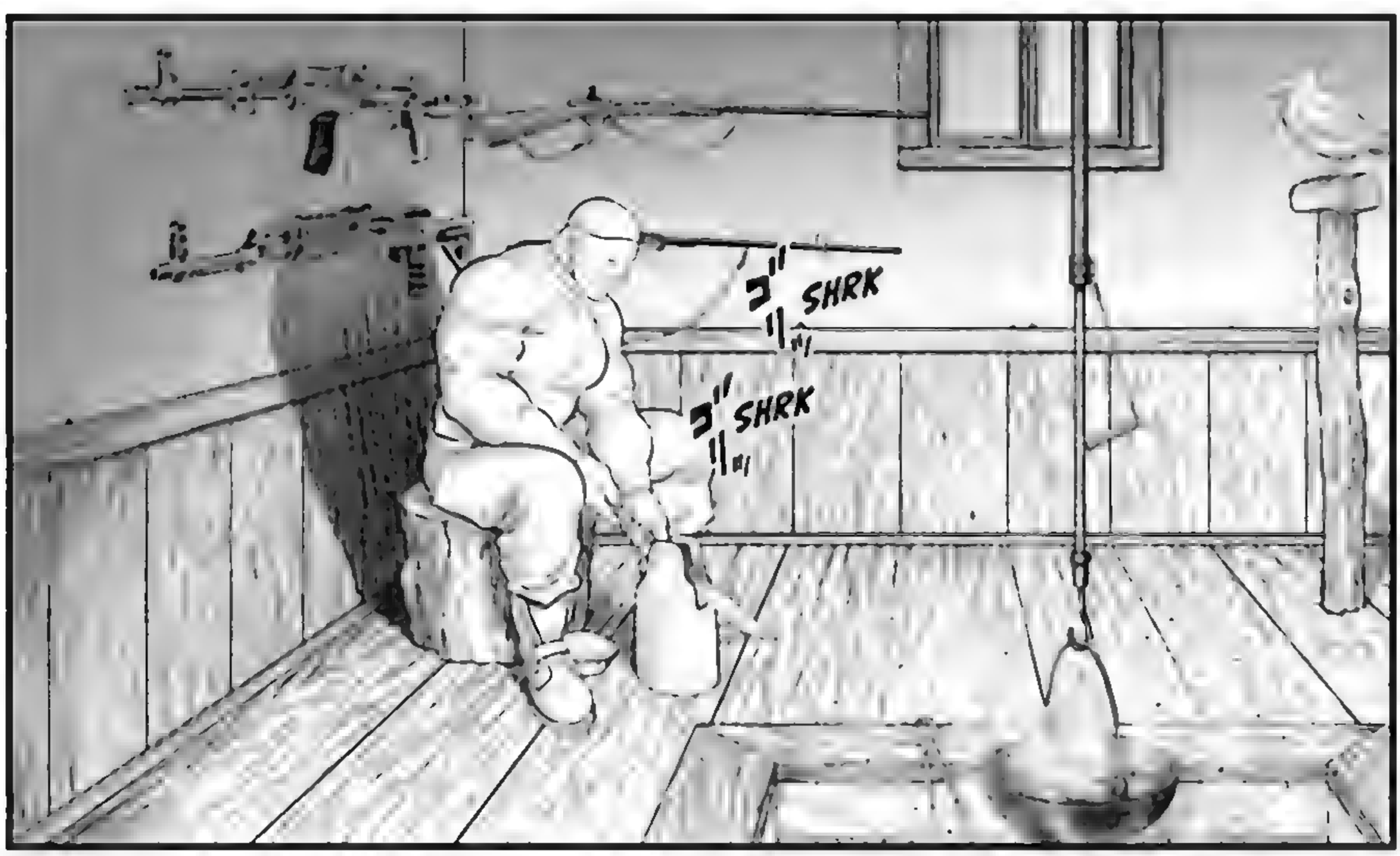
...AND SEE TO THE DEMISE OF THE RELIGIOUS ORGANIZATION KNOWN AS ATERUI.
OUR MISSION IS TWOFOLD. ELIMINATE THE DISPLAYED INDIVIDUAL...
#034067
OSAKI LIST

YES, SIR.
LET'S MAKE THIS QUICK.

MOVE OUT.

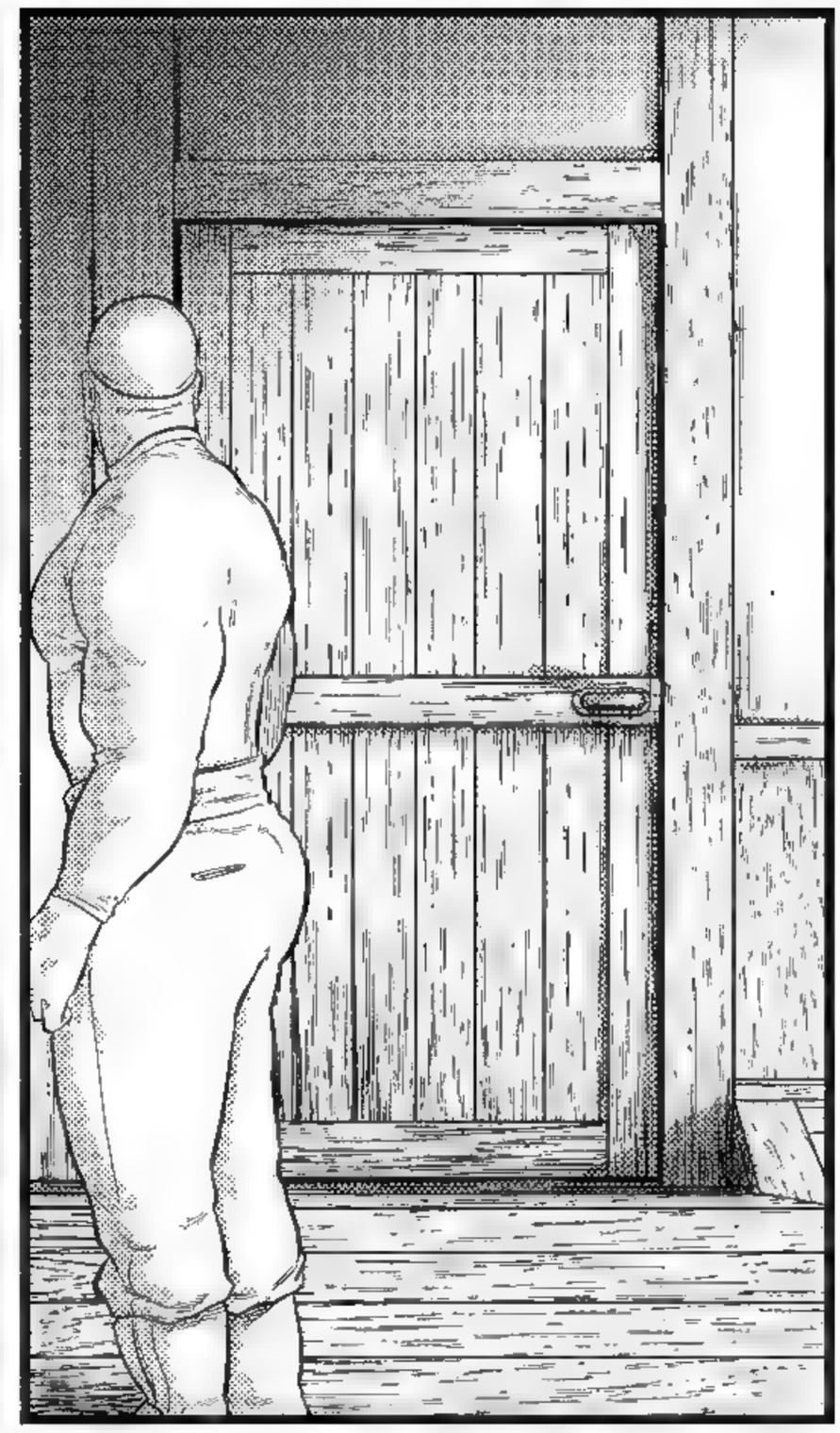
KRNCH

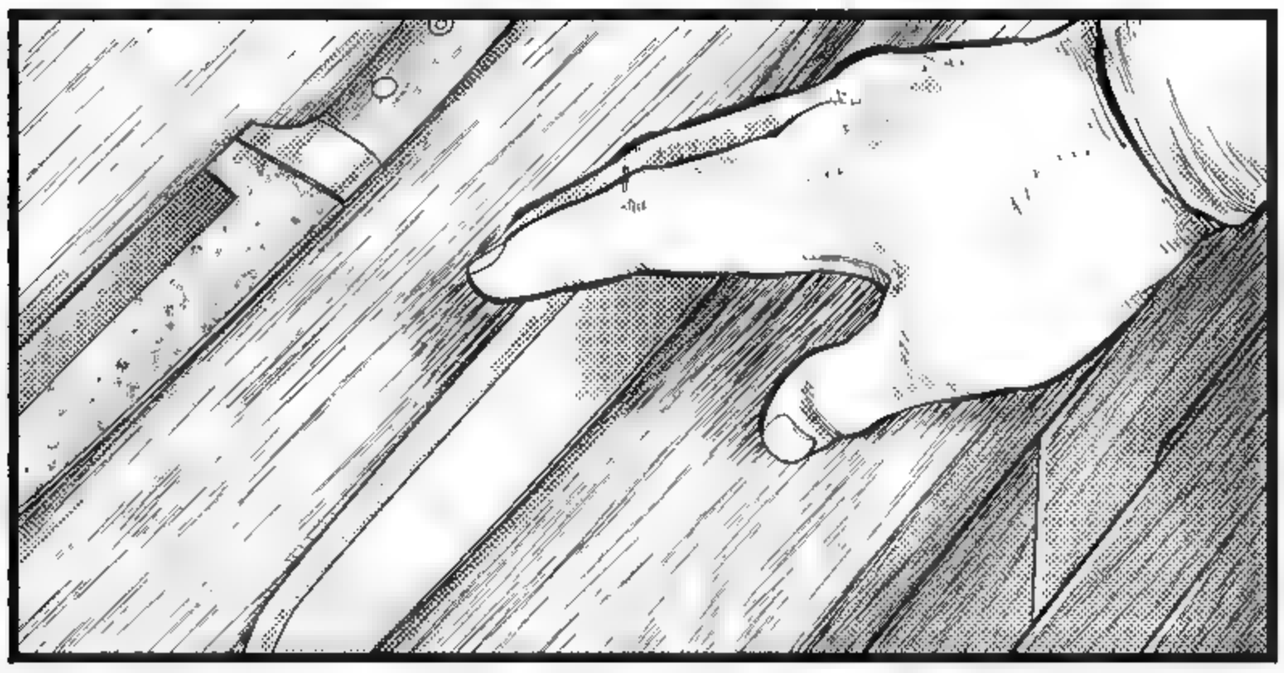


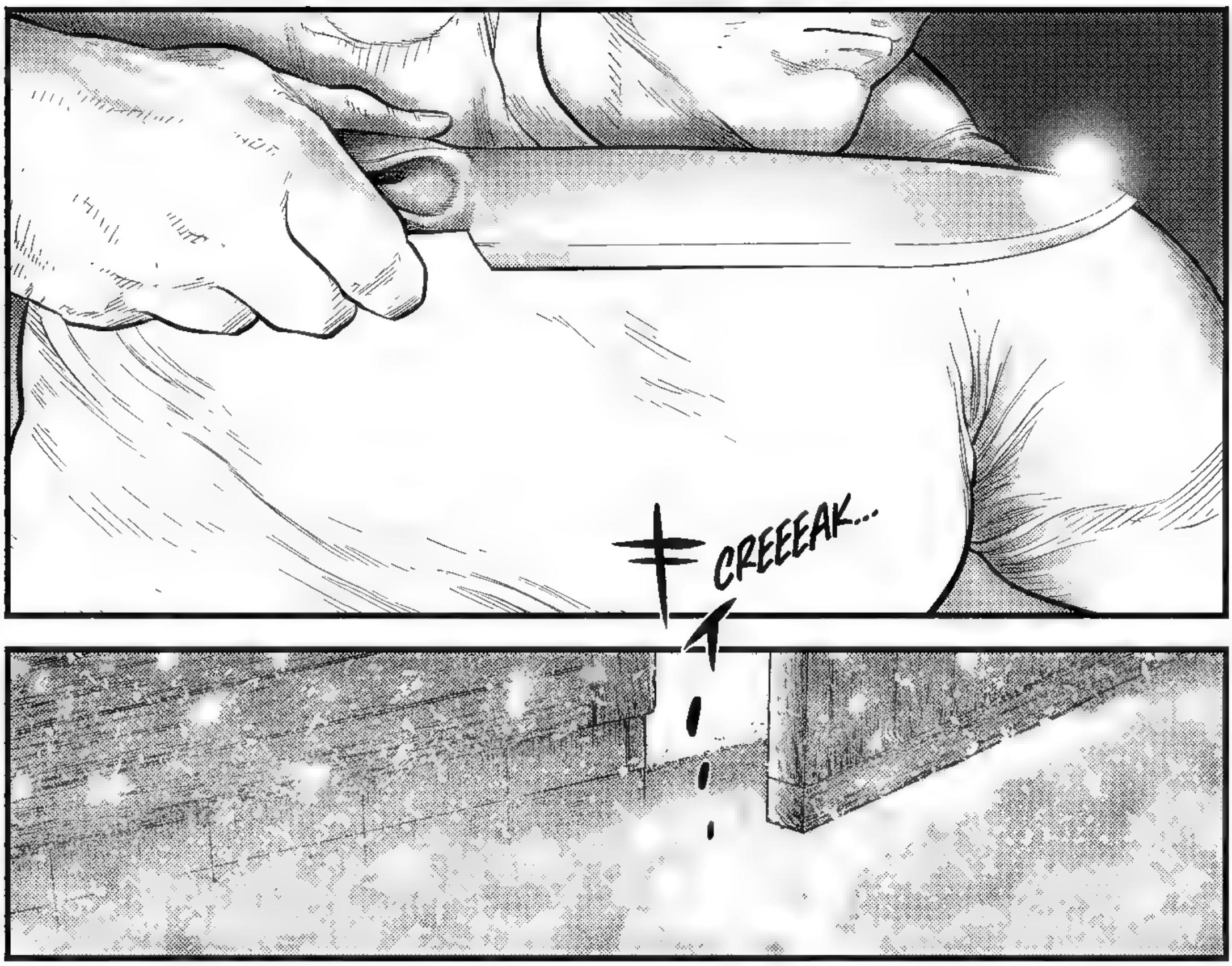

SHRK
SHRK

CLNK...

PA...
PA...



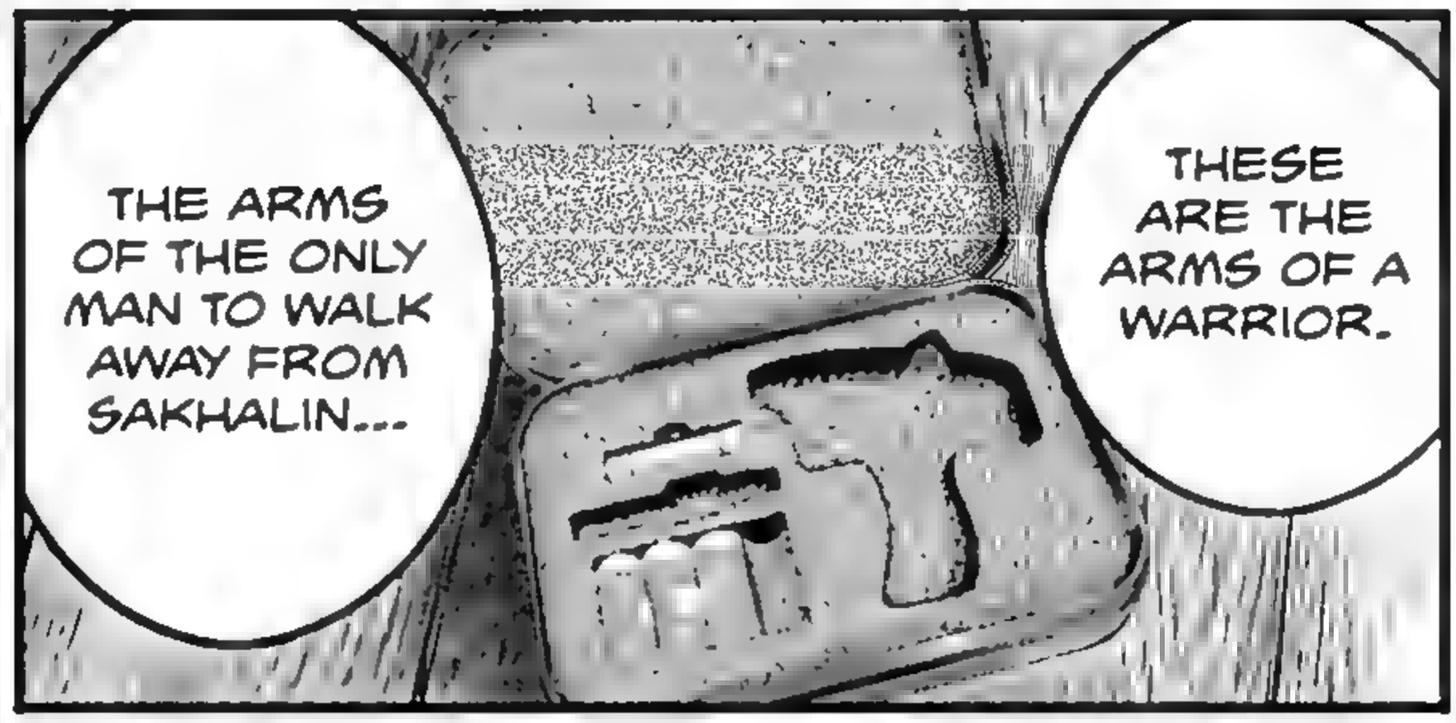



CREEEAK...

HELLO THERE.
STILL HAVING DREAMS?

KTHP
KTHP
QUITE THE BLIZZARD OUT THERE.
FWP
FWP
...YET YOU CAN'T BOTHER TO KEEP A SINGLE COAT HANGER AROUND.
...HMPH. A TROVE OF WEAPONS LIFTED FROM UNWANTED VISITORS...

JUST LIKE ALWAYS.
SCARS EVERY-WHERE I LOOK.


THE ARMS OF THE ONLY MAN TO WALK AWAY FROM SAKHALIN...
THESE ARE THE ARMS OF A WARRIOR.

...AFTER STOPPING THE RUSSIANS DEAD IN THEIR TRACKS. REDUCING THEM TO NOTHING.

WHAT DRIVES A MAN OF SUCH FORTITUDE...
...TO WAVER, AFTER ALL THIS TIME?

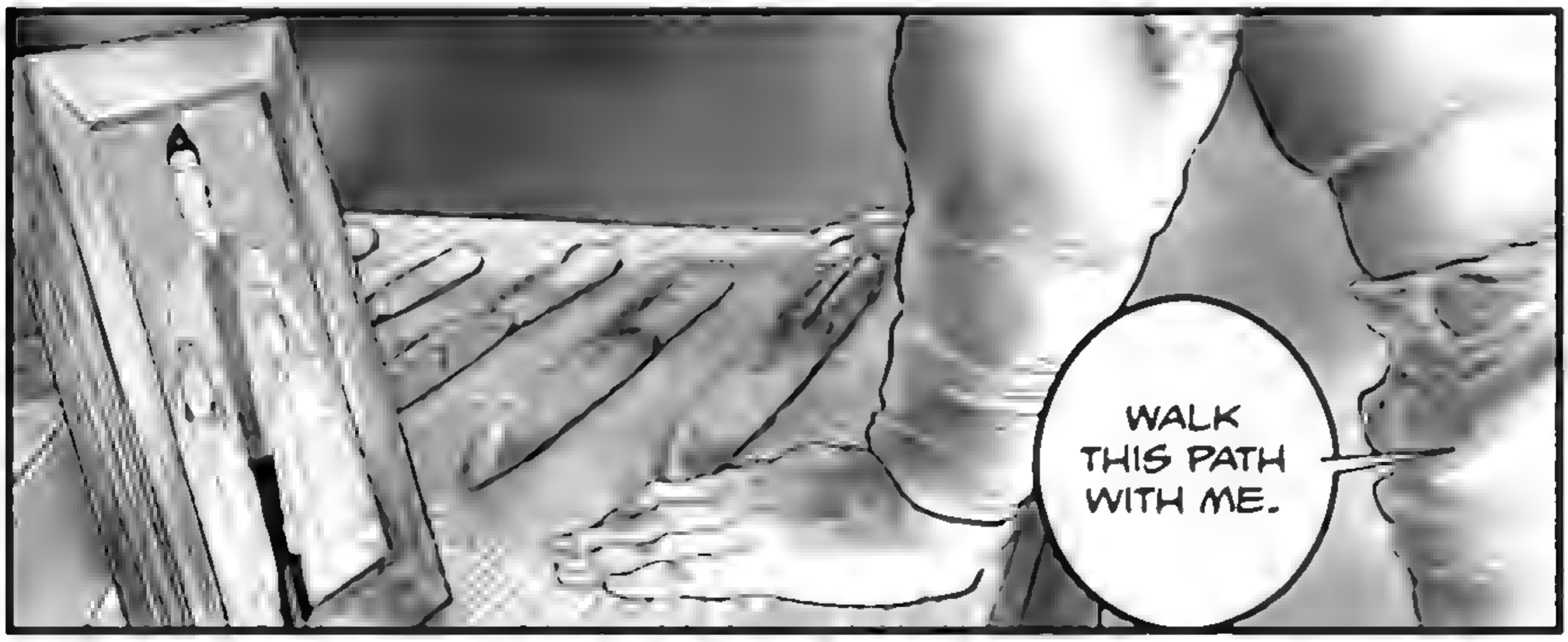
PSHHH

THERE'S NO ESCAPE. ANY CHANCE TO GET OUT IS LONG GONE.

SOME VENERABLE PROSTHETICS EXPOSED TO THE LIGHT OF DAY, IN ALL THEIR FILTHY GLORY?

IT CHANGES NOTHING. YOU CANNOT STOP THIS.

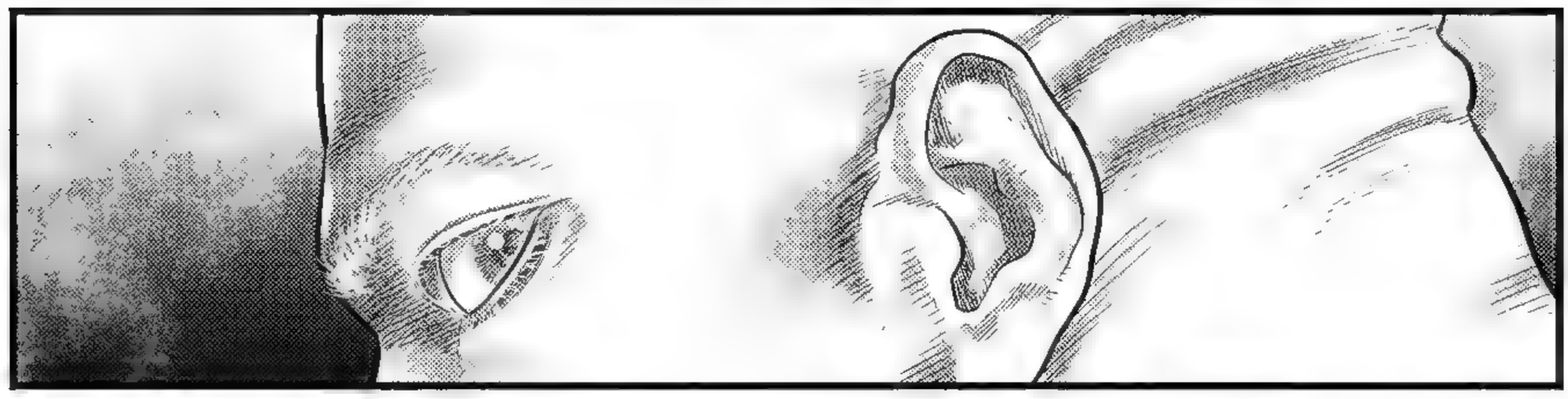
SNAP
OAK, AH!

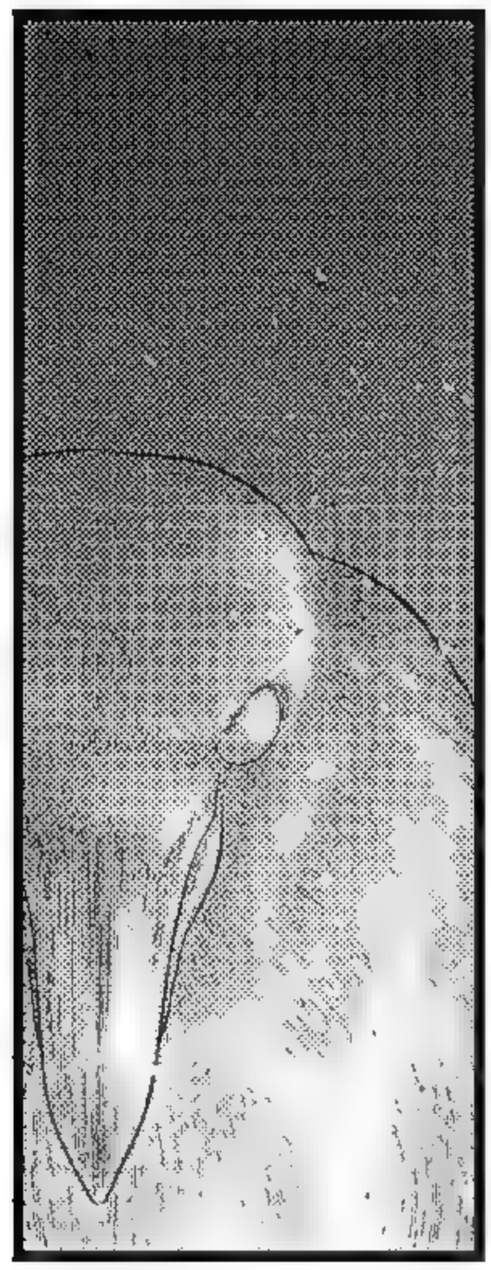

WALK THIS PATH WITH ME.

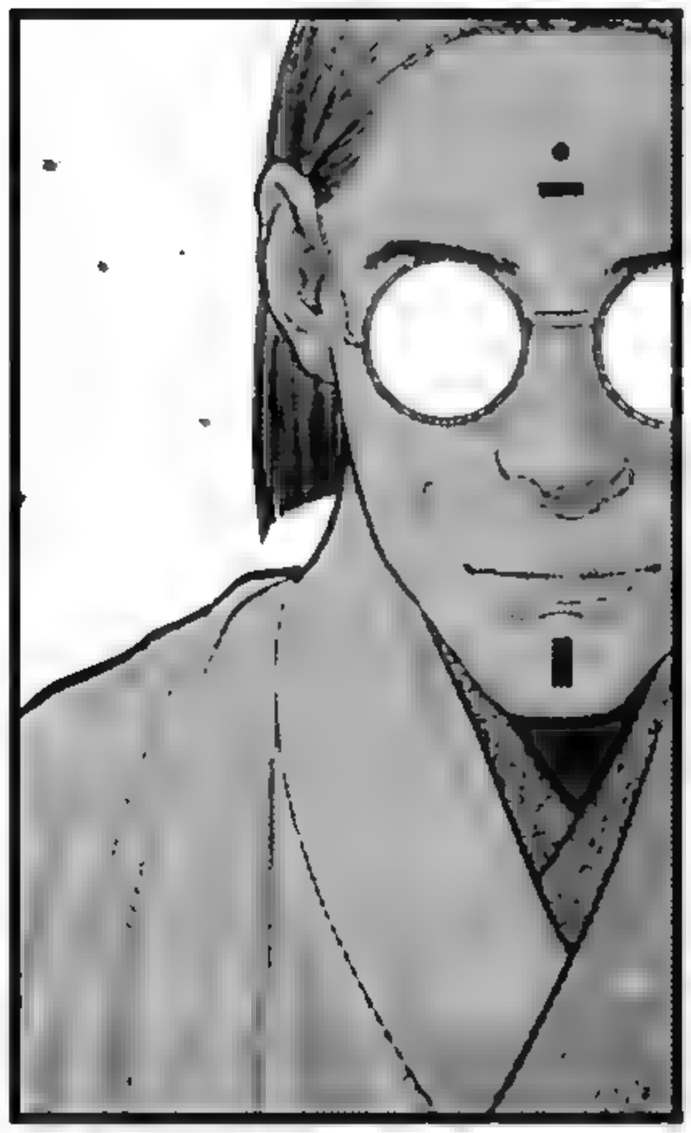
...YOU'LL STAND AT MY SIDE AS YOU DID IN YOUTH.
IF YOU WISH TO SEE FATHER'S FINAL WISH FULFILLED...

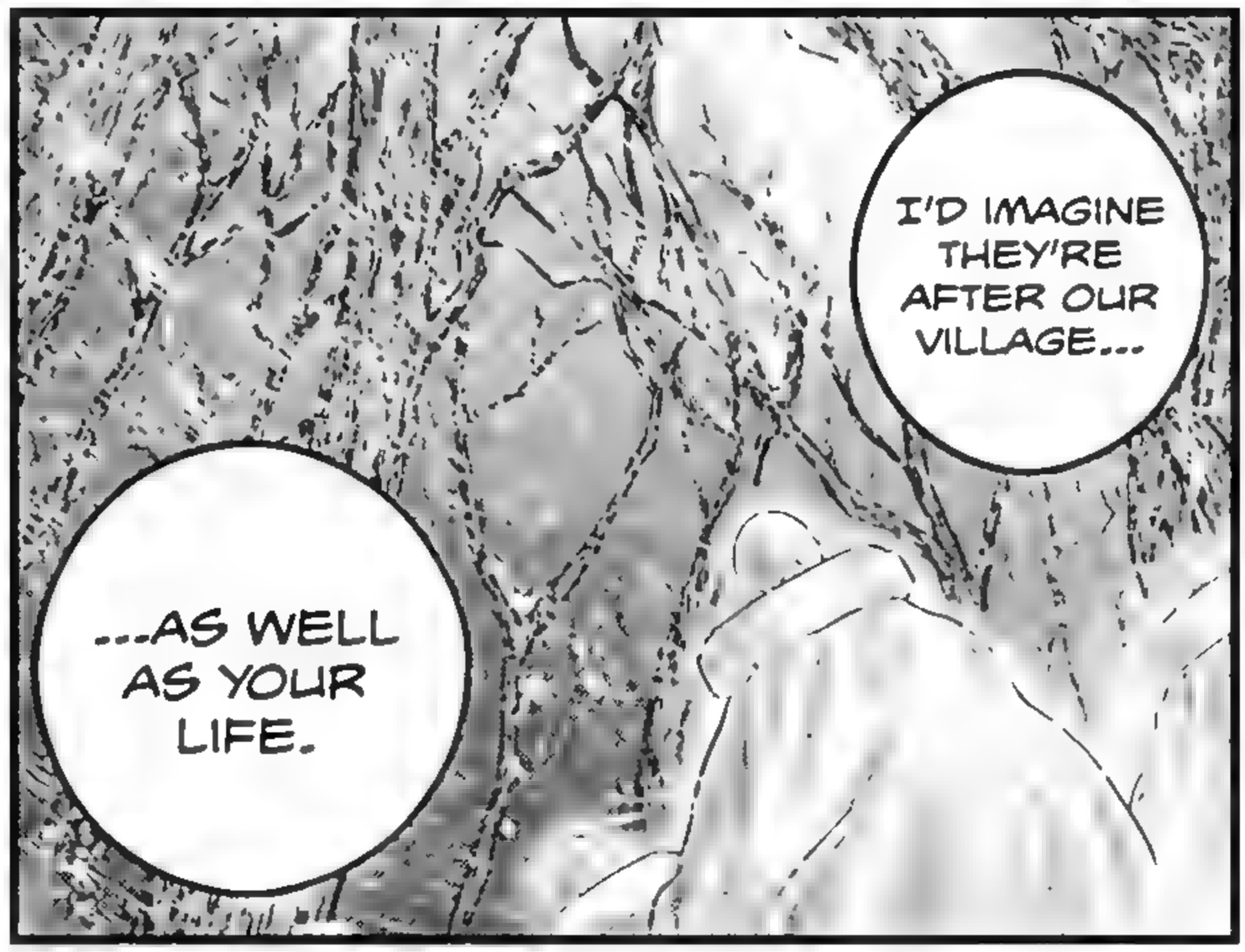
...SURELY YOU MUST STILL DREAM OF MOTHER.

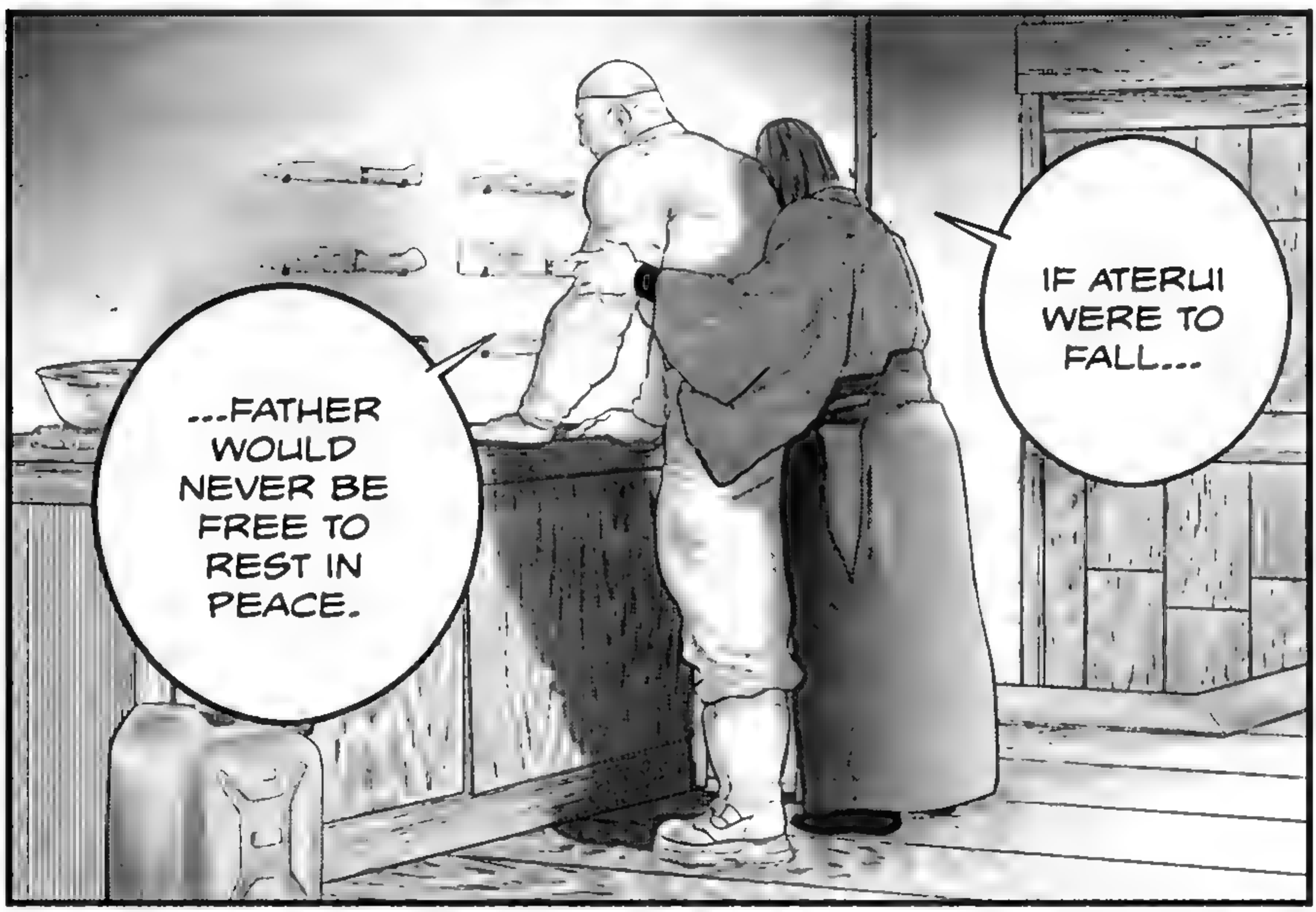
THOUGH FATHER'S WARMTH IS LOST TO US...








I'D IMAGINE THEY'RE AFTER OUR VILLAGE...
...AS WELL AS YOUR LIFE.


IF ATERUI WERE TO FALL...
...FATHER WOULD NEVER BE FREE TO REST IN PEACE.

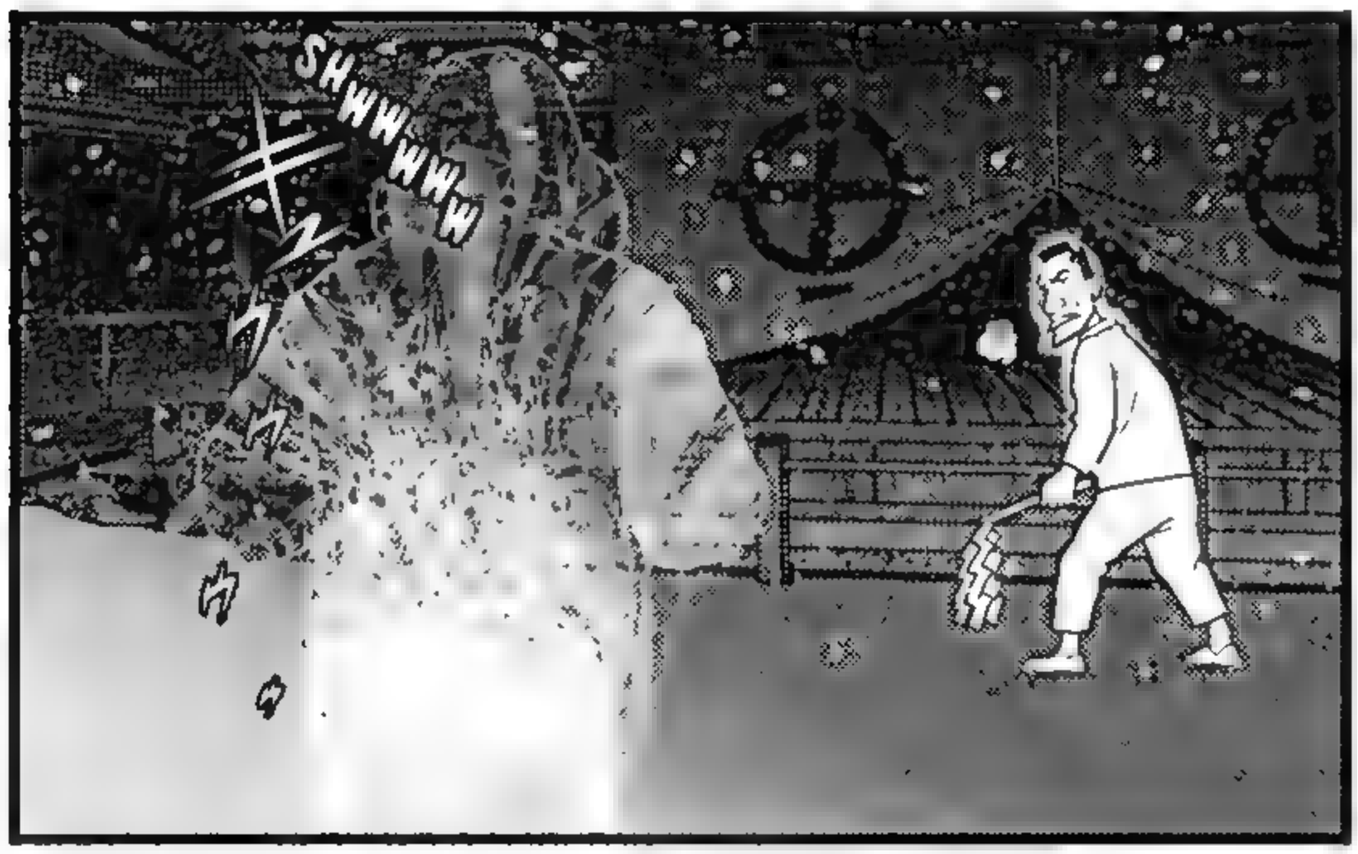
YOU KNOW WHAT YOU MUST DO. WHERE YOU MUST STRIKE.

SO GO, MY WHITE BEAR.

THE TIME TO HUNT IS AT HAND.

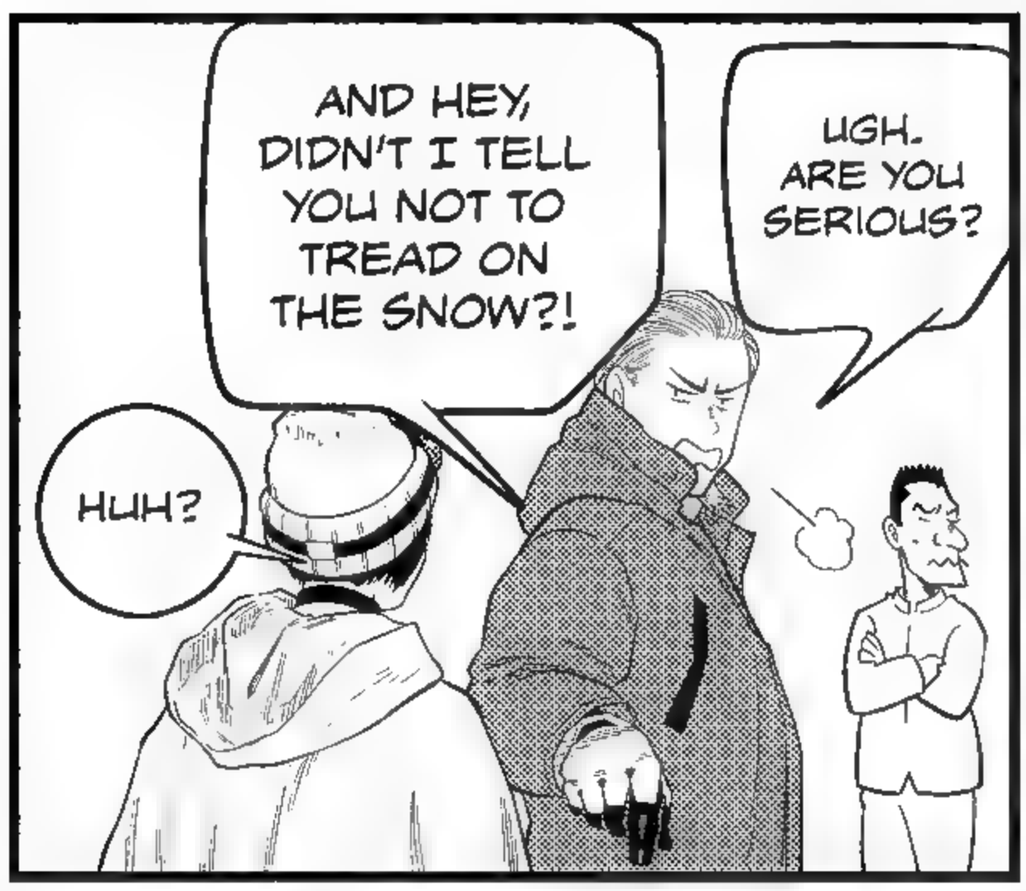
KRMP...
FWAP
FWAP

SNIFF


SHWWWWW

TOOK YOU LONG ENOUGH...
SNF SNF

LOOK AT YOU. ONE OF THE LOCALS ALREADY.
NICE TO SEE YOU, TOO.


AND HEY, DIDN'T I TELL YOU NOT TO TREAD ON THE SNOW?!
UGH. ARE YOU SERIOUS?
HUH?

HOW ABOUT YOU SPEND A WHOLE DAY, MORNING TO NIGHT, WAVING SOME STICK AT A HEAP OF PROSTHETICS?!
YOU HAVE NO IDEA WHAT I'VE BEEN THROUGH!
FWOMP
HEY, BUT YOU'RE LOOKING REALLY GOOD! YOUR AURA'S SPOTLESS!

GO GET RID OF THOSE PRINTS.
OH. SHOOT.

GET THE ONE GIVING ORDERS OUT OF THE PICTURE, AND THINGS MOVE A LOT SMOOTHER.
HAH! WAY TO FLEX THE OLD DETECTIVE MUSCLES.

EVERYONE KNOWS TO STEP ON BRANCHES AND ROCKS.
HMPH. ROOKIE MISTAKE.
FWUFF FWUFF
WHERE'S THE OFFICIANT?

HUH?! YOU SET THAT UP?!
WENT TO GIVE A STATEMENT TO THE POLICE.
CALLED IN A FAVOR WITH AN OLD FRIEND.
HE TOOK THE BAIT. GOOD.

I'M ANXIOUS TO SECURE A ROUTE TO THAT OLD CONSOLE I SAW.
SNNNT
GIMME THE DATA YOU'VE COLLECTED.

...I'M THINKING I'D LIKE TO FIGURE OUT WHAT'S ON THAT CONSOLE.
ONCE IT GETS LATE, AND EVERYONE'S ASLEEP...

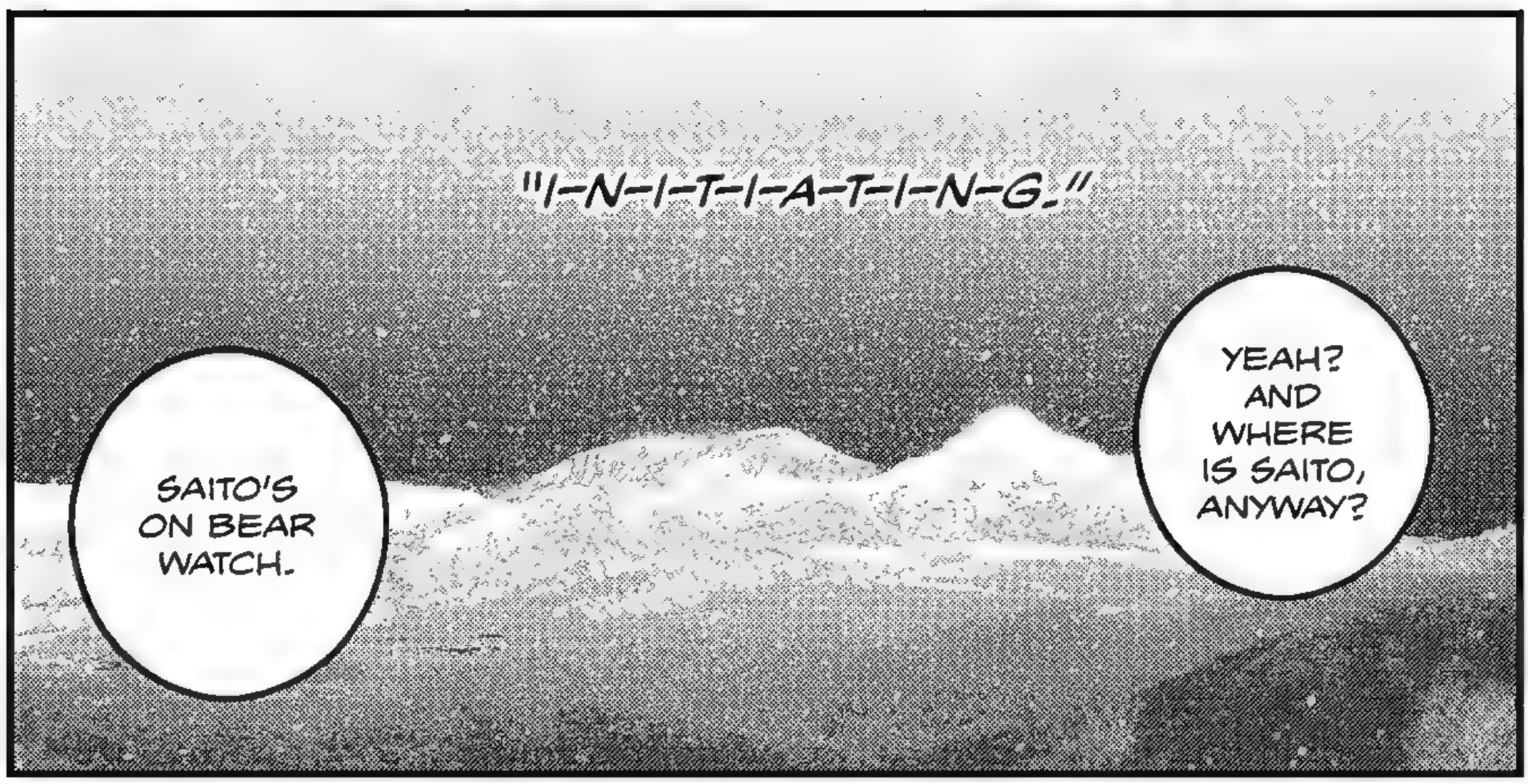
ROOKIE.
A WIRED HOOKUP, 'CAUSE WE CAN'T GET ANY SIGNAL HERE.
AH, SO THAT'S WHAT THAT THING AROUND YOUR NECK IS FOR.
I THOUGHT MAYBE YOU WERE TRYING TO COPY MY STYLE.
SO CLUE-LESS.

AND NEXT UP IS...
WILL YOU JUST SHUT UP ALREADY ?!
PULLING RANK LIKE YOU'VE GOT ANY TO BEGIN WITH!
GRK! GRRRK!

BETTER NOT. LOSE YOUR CHANNELING, AND POOF! THERE GOES YOUR ONE SAVING GRACE.
CYBER-BRAINS SURE ARE HANDY. MAYBE I OUGHTA GET ONE.

SMART • MORSE
DIT
DIT
DAH
IT MEANS HE'S CON-TACTING SAITO.

WHAT IS THAT SUP-POSED TO MEAN?
CHECK IT OUT! HE'S USING HIGH FREQUENCY MORSE!
TAP
TAP

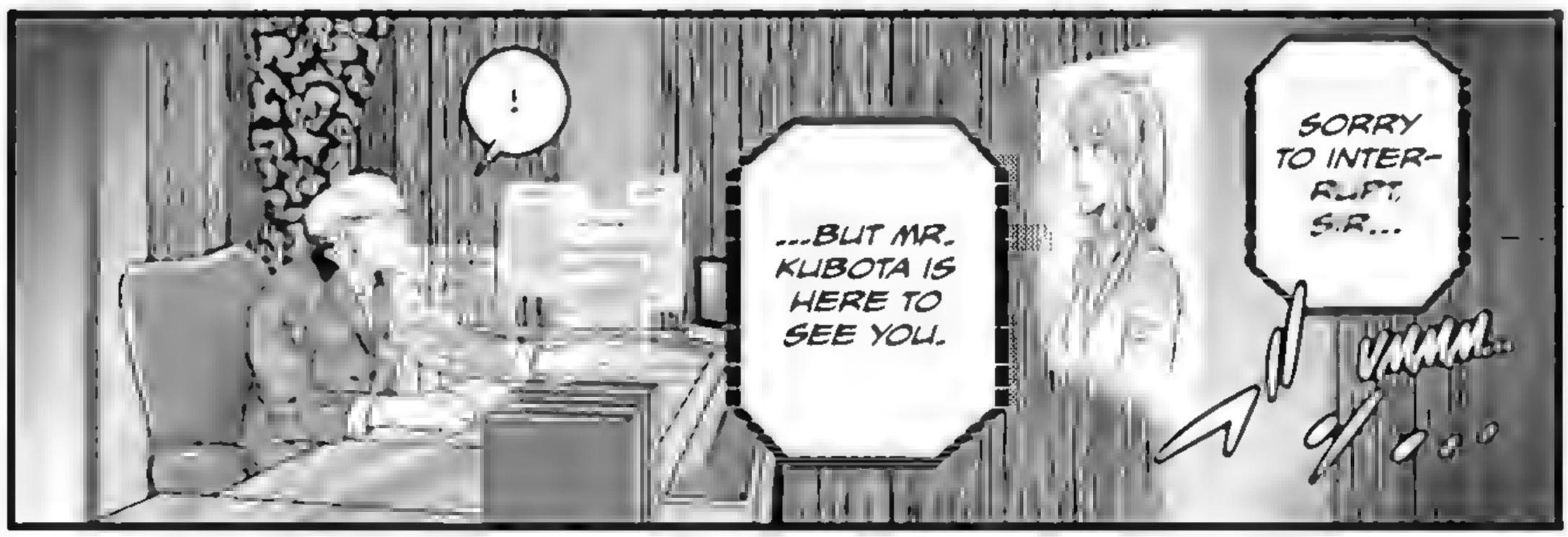

"I-N-I-T-I-A-T-I-N-G."
SAITO'S ON BEAR WATCH.
YEAH? AND WHERE IS SAITO, ANYWAY?

LET'S GET THIS SHOW ON THE ROAD.
ALL RIGHT.

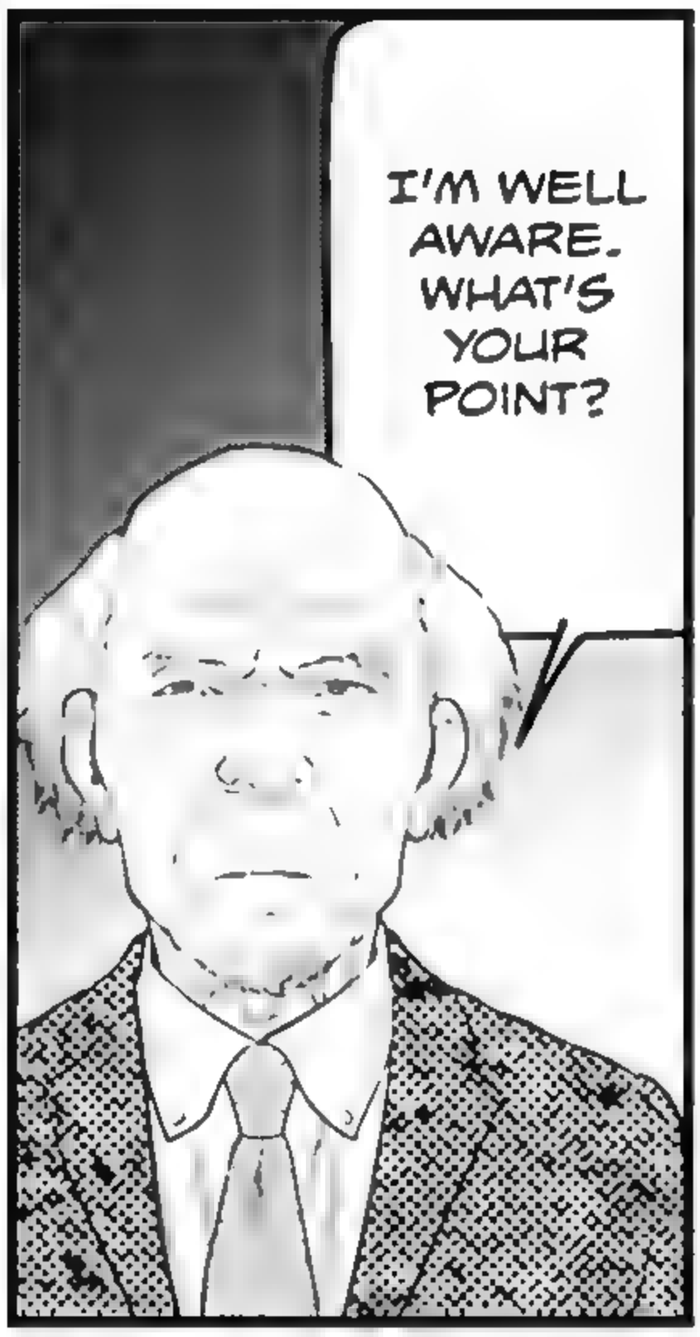
07

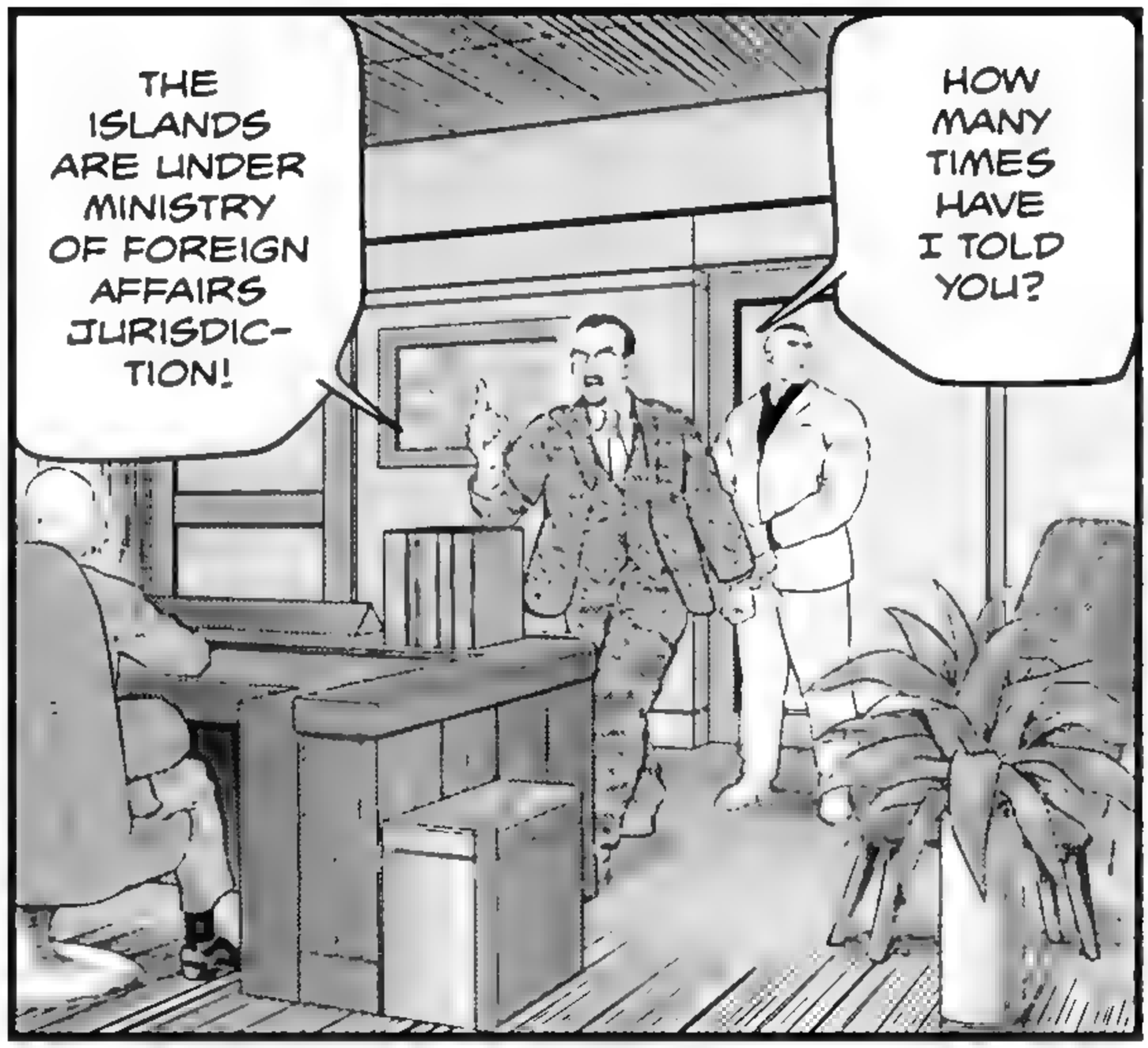
INVISIBLE ENEMIES

ORT/003.


!
...BUT MR. KUBOTA IS HERE TO SEE YOU.
SORRY TO INTER-RUPT, S.R...
UMMM...

THIS TALK ABOUT OKINAWA BETTER NOT BE TRUE!
DAMN IT, ARAMAKI!
FWAM

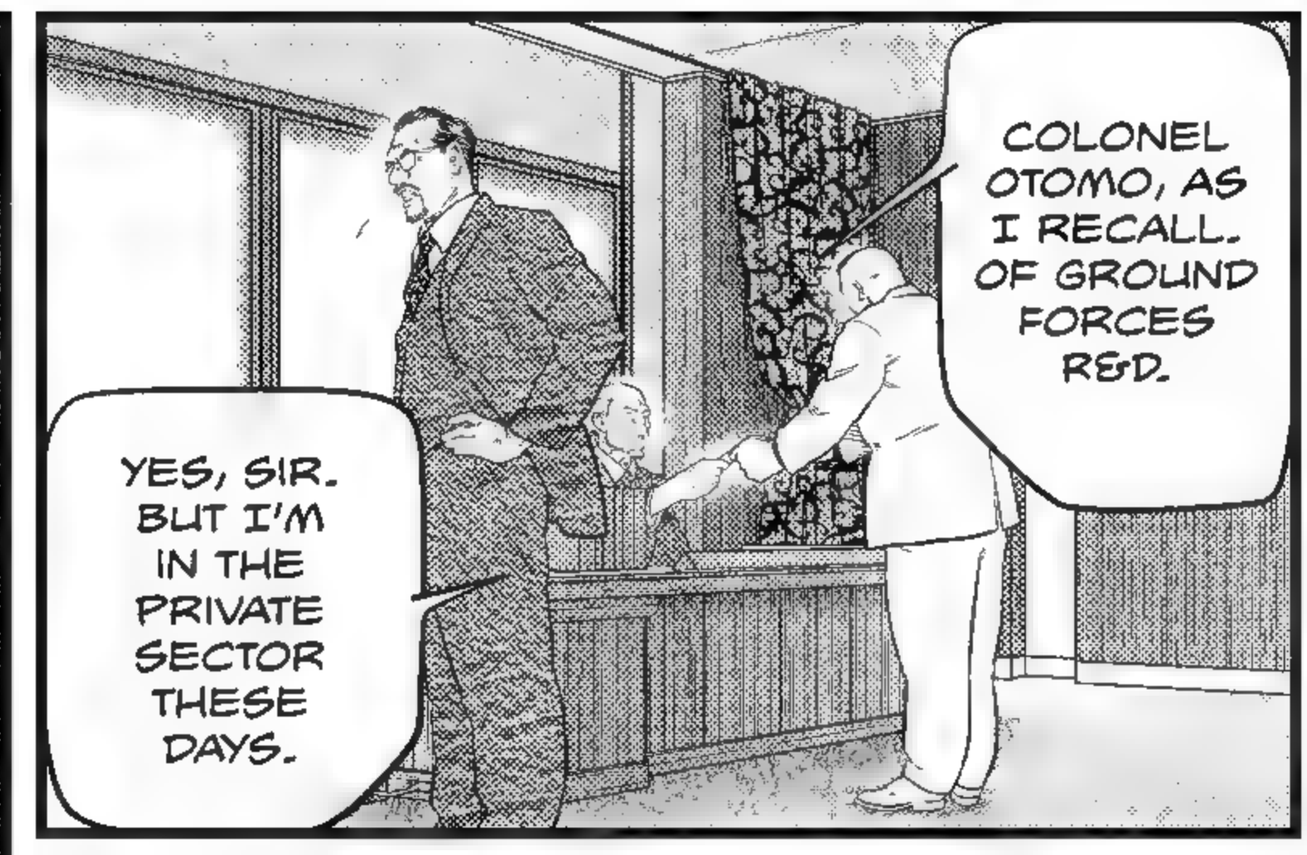

I'M WELL AWARE. WHAT'S YOUR POINT?


THE ISLANDS ARE UNDER MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS JURISDIC-TION!
HOW MANY TIMES HAVE I TOLD YOU?

I THINK YOU'VE GONE AND HURT MR. KUBOTA'S PRIDE.
HAHA...
STUB-BORN OLD FOOL...

THE NAME'S OTOMO.
CHIEF ARAMAKI. IT'S BEEN QUITE SOME TIME.

HE WORKS FOR OSAKI...?
Osaki Heavy Industries
General Manager
Tomaru Otomo
East Asia Manufacturing Development Dept.
〒886-5657
OSAKI MIMATOKU
MEIJIDOORI 238-78


COLONEL OTOMO, AS I RECALL. OF GROUND FORCES R&D.
YES, SIR. BUT I'M IN THE PRIVATE SECTOR THESE DAYS.

?!

WE WANT SECTION 9 OUT OF TOHOKU.
ALLOW ME TO BE FRANK, SIR.

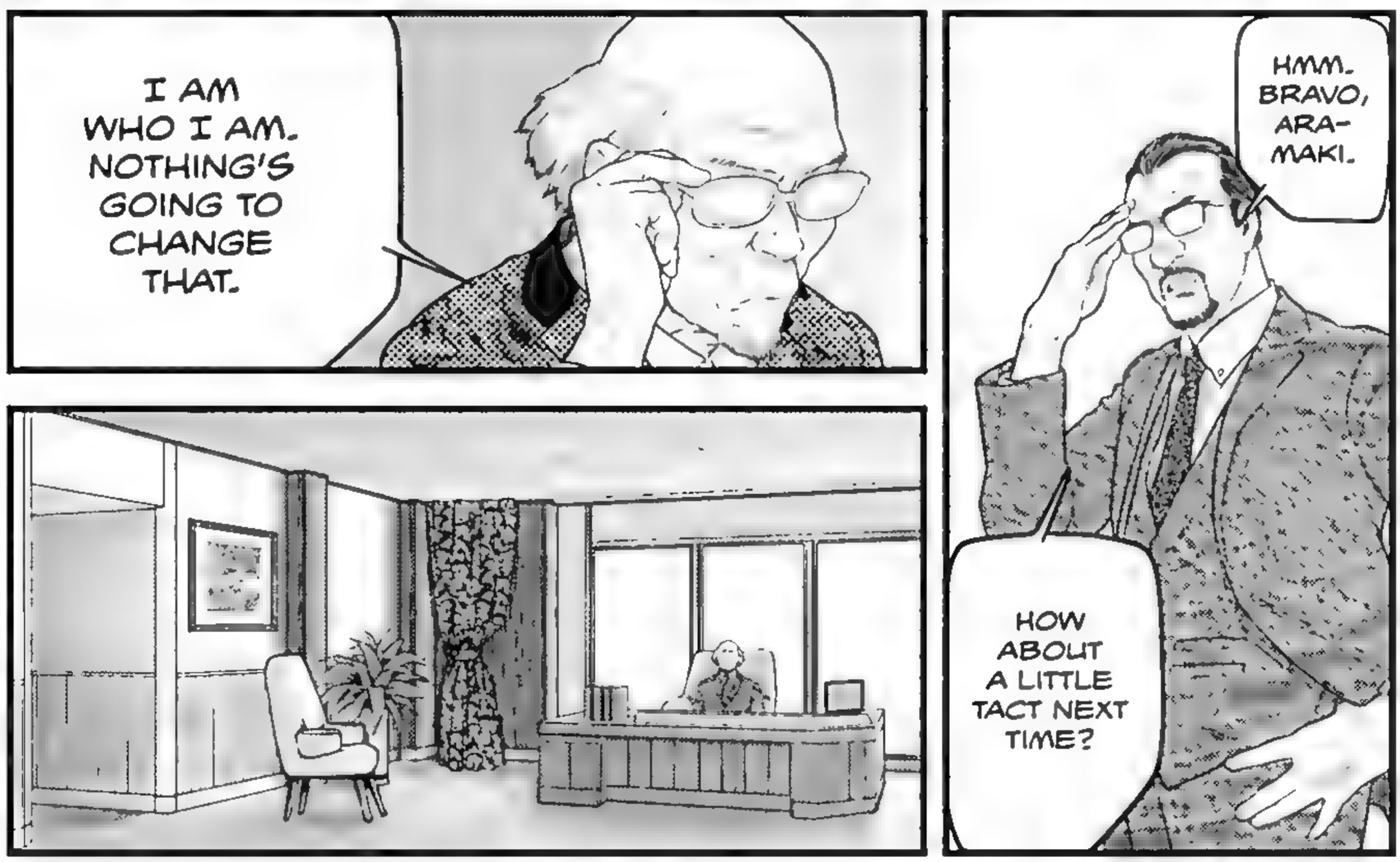
NOTHING PUBLIC SECURITY NEED MEDDLE IN.
IT'S OUR PROBLEM. WE'LL DEAL WITH IT.
...
THE ATERUI ISSUE, I PRE-SUME?

AM I TO ASSUME IT WOULD BE *INCONVENIENT* IF ANY TIES BETWEEN ATERUI AND OSAKI WERE TO COME TO LIGHT?
IS THAT SO?

...NOT EVEN THE PRIME MINISTER'S OWN SPECIAL FORCES ARE MEANT TO PRY.
I'D ADVISE YOU, SIR, THAT THERE ARE *SOME* MATTERS INTO WHICH...

...IS PRECISELY WHY SECTION 9 EXISTS.
PRYING INTO SUCH MATTERS...

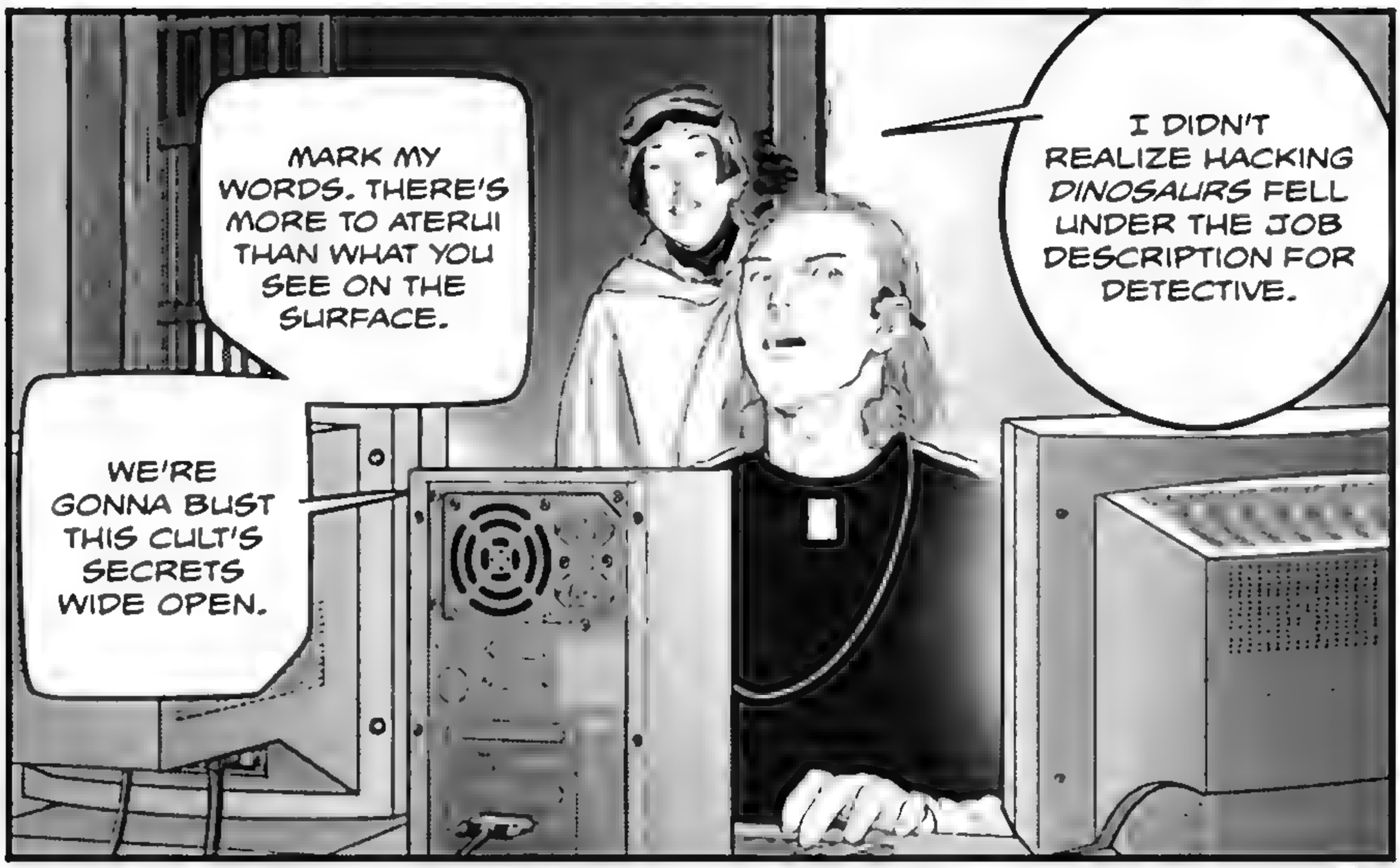
GOOD DAY, CHIEF.

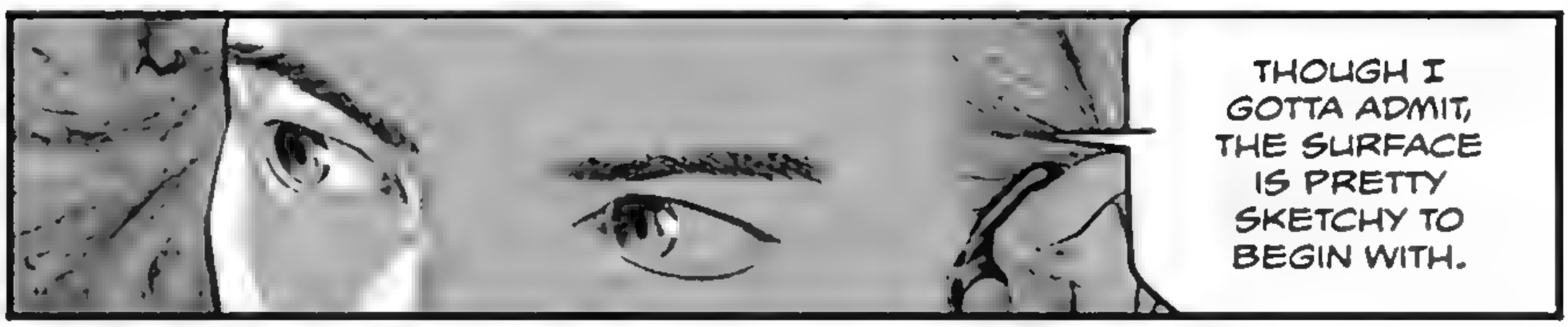

I AM WHO I AM. NOTHING'S GOING TO CHANGE THAT.
HMM. BRAVO, ARA-MAKI.
HOW ABOUT A LITTLE TACT NEXT TIME?

PATCH ME THROUGH TO THE CHANNELING AGENCY.
OPERATOR.

HOW THRILLING.

非接続地区
UNCONNECTED AREA

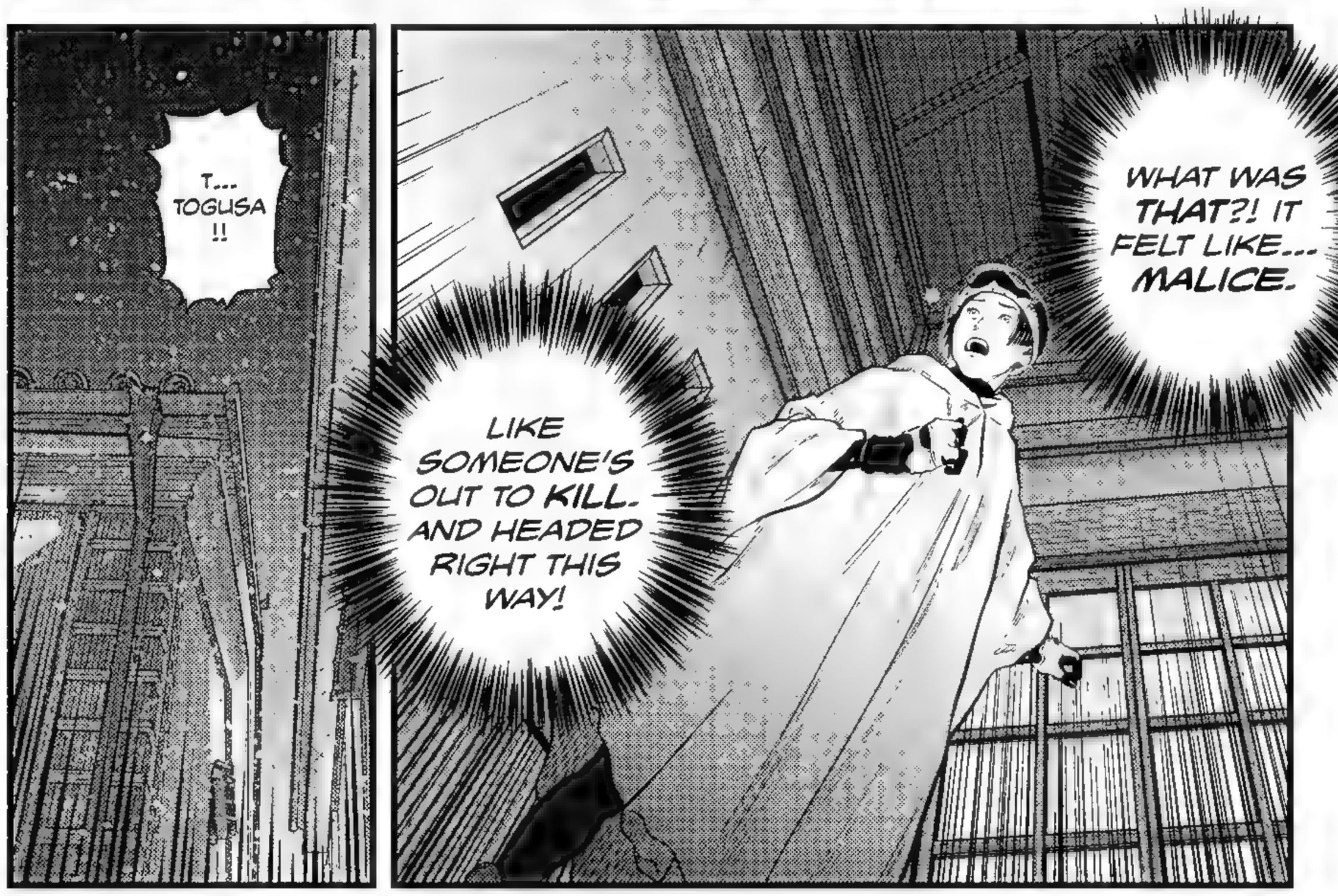

MARK MY WORDS. THERE'S MORE TO ATERUI THAN WHAT YOU SEE ON THE SURFACE.
I DIDN'T REALIZE HACKING *DINOSAURS* FELL UNDER THE JOB DESCRIPTION FOR DETECTIVE.
WE'RE GONNA BUST THIS CULT'S SECRETS WIDE OPEN.


THOUGH I GOTTA ADMIT, THE SURFACE IS PRETTY SKETCHY TO BEGIN WITH.

LIKE ANYONE'S GONNA SHOW UP...
...IN THE DEAD OF NIGHT.

AREN'T YOU SUPPOSED TO BE ON LOOKOUT DUTY?!
YEAH, YEAH.

"h" "h" SHUDDER


T... TOGUSA !!
LIKE SOMEONE'S OUT TO KILL. AND HEADED RIGHT THIS WAY!
WHAT WAS THAT?! IT FELT LIKE... MALICE.

KSHH ...
KSHH ...
?!

SOMEBODY'S SKIDDING ACROSS THE SNOW.

SHFFFF

THERE'S A WHOLE GROUP OF 'EM. AND THEY'RE HEADED STRAIGHT INTO ATERUI...

THAT'S GOTTA BE THERMOPTIC CAMO.

DAH

DIT

DIT

INTRUDERS IN THE VILLAGE...?!

IS THAT WHAT TSUNAGI WAS TALKING ABOUT?

GRAB

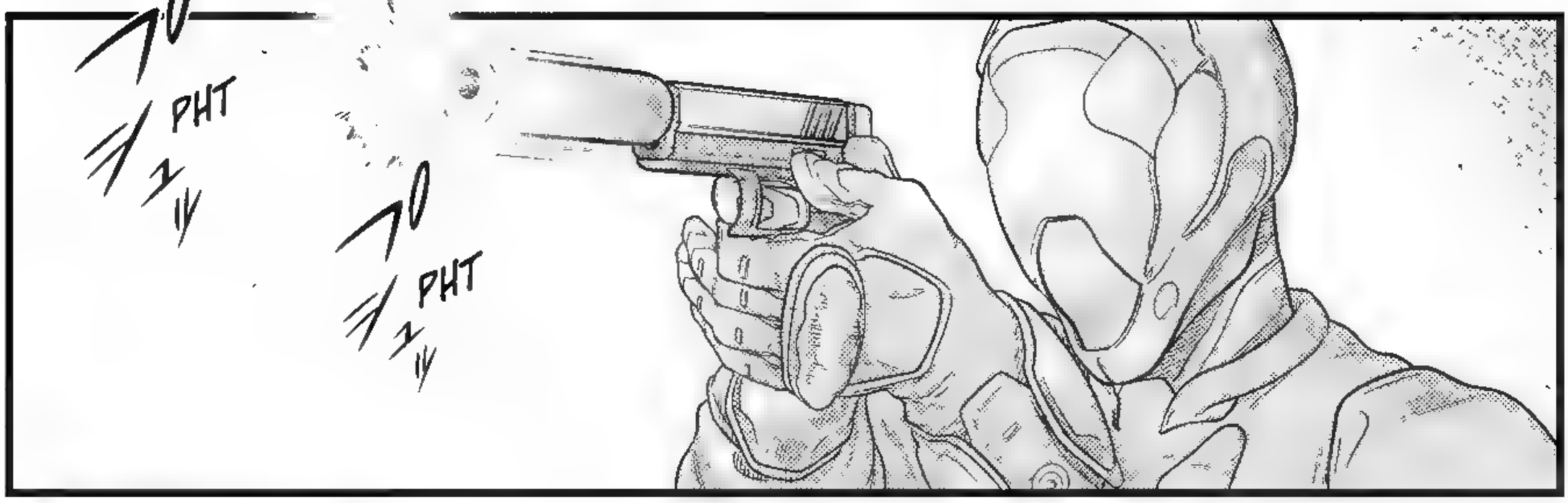
HEADS UP, TOGUSA. WE'VE GOT VISITORS.

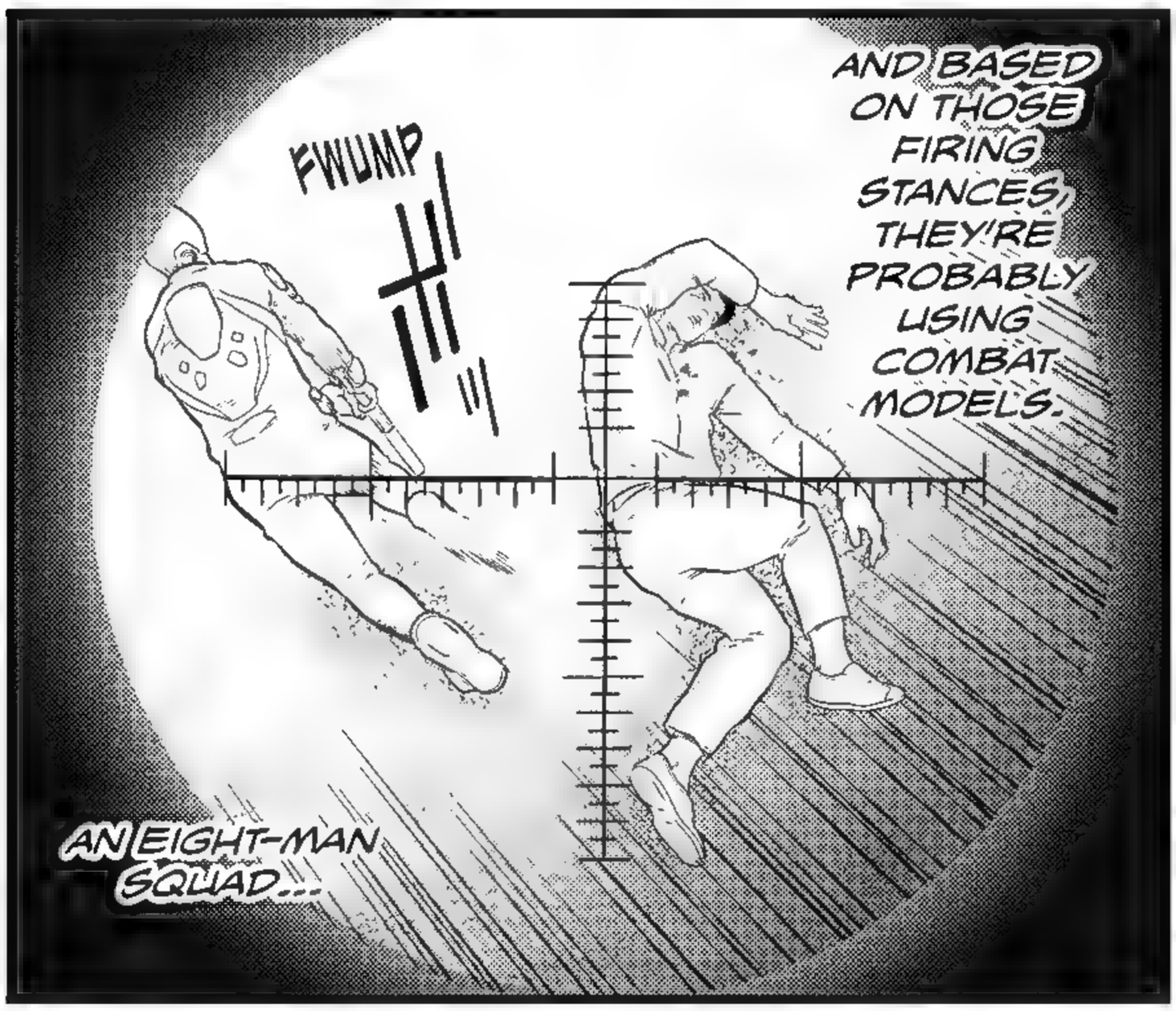
YOU MEAN IT ISN'T THE WHITE BEAR?!
STAY SHARP. WE'VE GOT COMPANY.
NEW COMPANY.

THAT'S THE WORD.
THMP

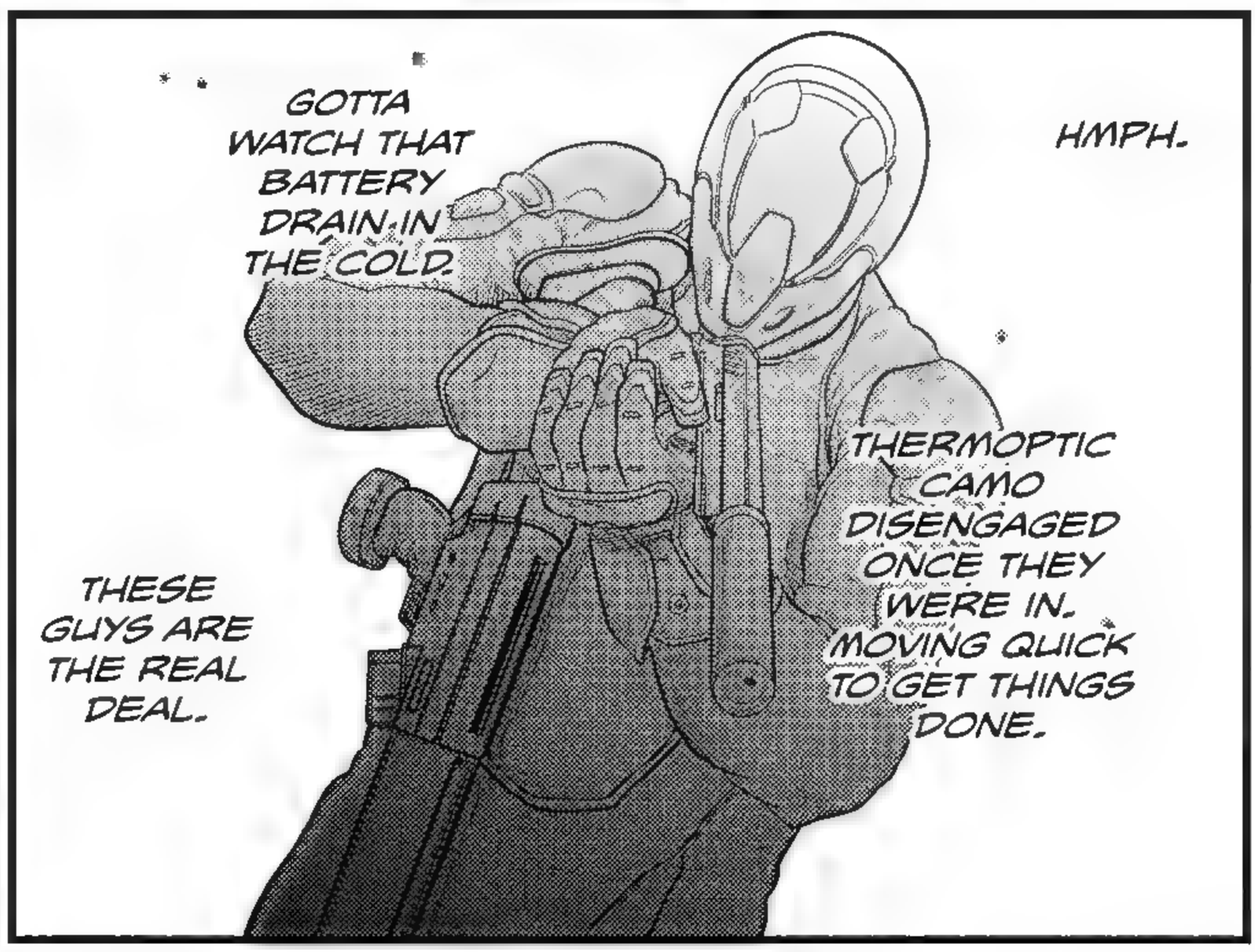
SOME KIND OF OUTSIDE SQUAD.

WHO ARE THEY? AND WHY NOW?
DAMN IT ALL...





AND ANY UN-LUCKY WIT-NESS-ES...



...ARE DEAD BEFORE THEY EVEN REALIZE WHAT THEY'VE SEEN.

GREAT. JUST HAD TO BE HEADED IN THAT DIRECTION, HUH?

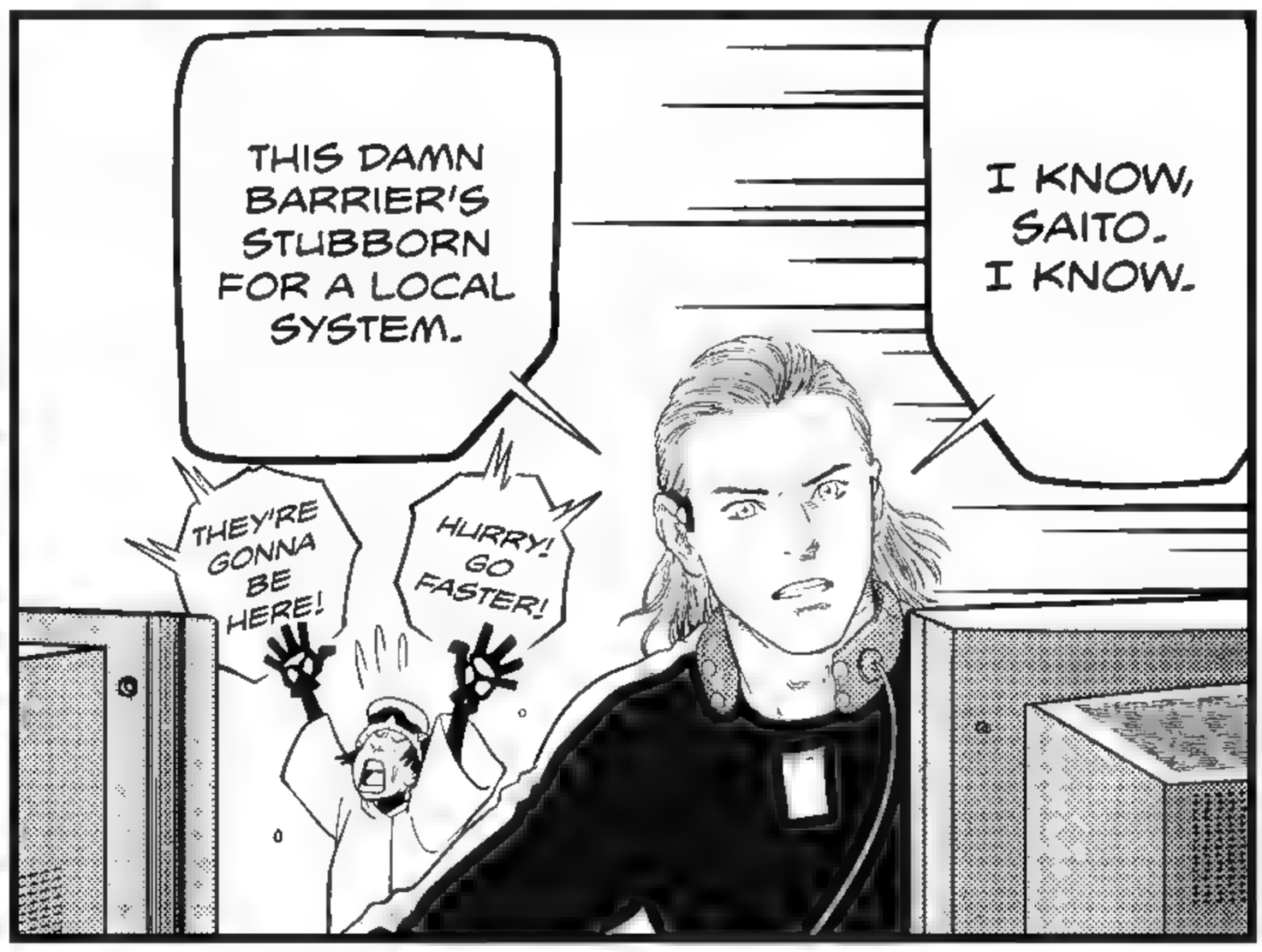
SOUNDS LIKE OUR NEW GUESTS ARE HEADED THIS WAY.
THEY'RE WHAT ?!

?!
DIT DIT
DAH

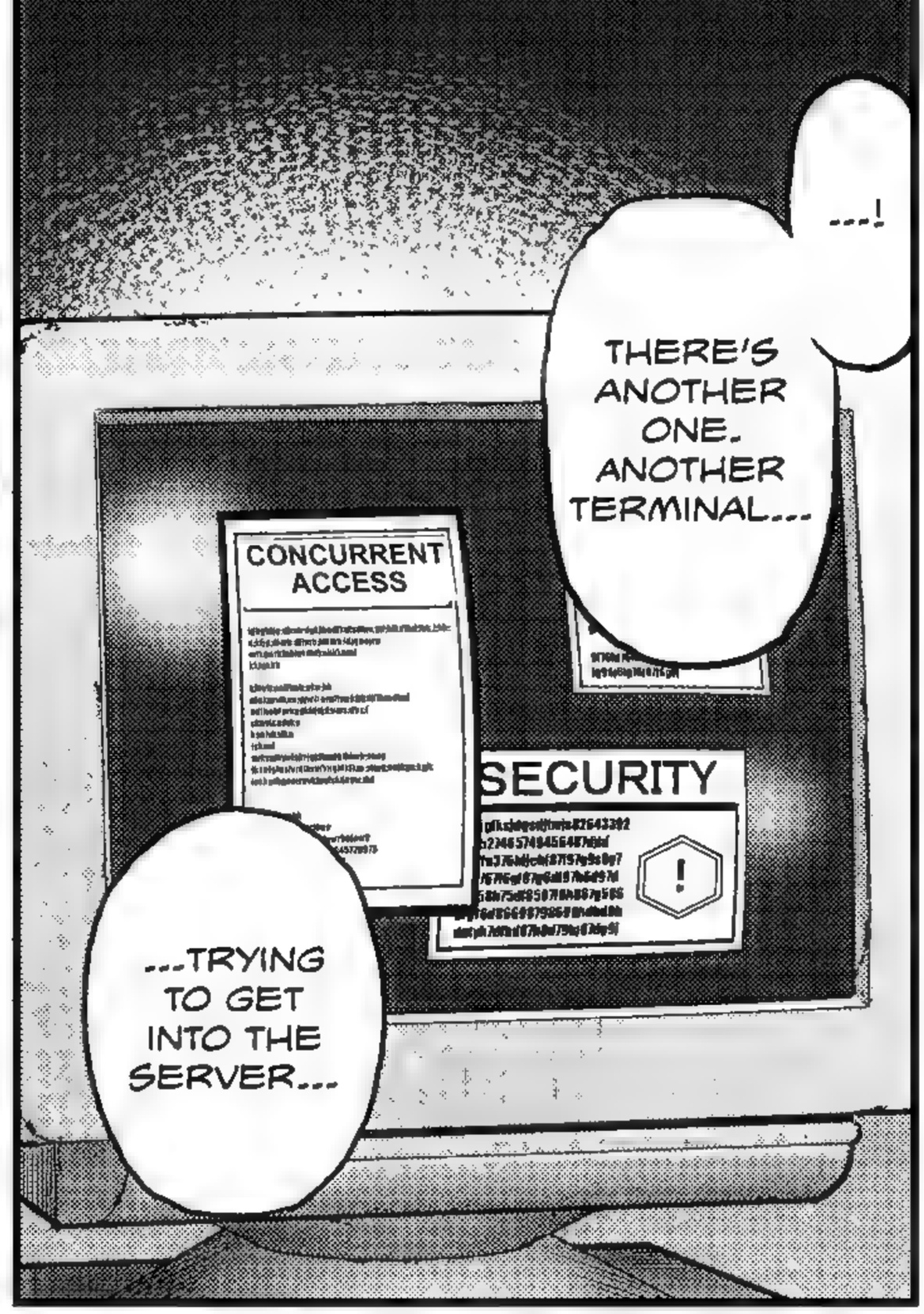
WH... WHY? WHAT NOW...?
TSUNAGI.
MAKE SURE TO STICK CLOSE.

THEY'RE RIGHT ON TOP OF YOU.
WHAT'S THE HOLDUP, TOGUSA?

GAH! HOW DO I GET THROUGH—
?!

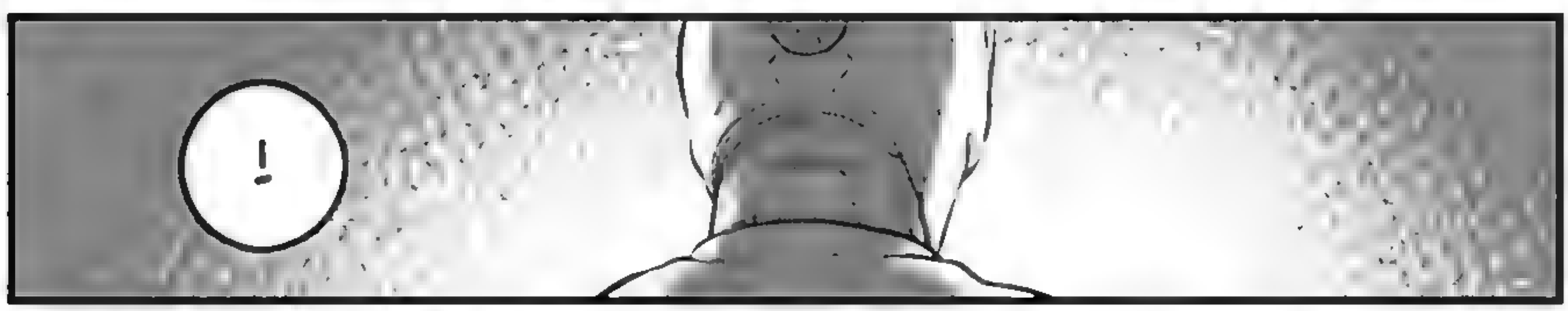

THIS DAMN BARRIER'S STUBBORN FOR A LOCAL SYSTEM.
I KNOW, SAITO. I KNOW.
THEY'RE GONNA BE HERE!
HURRY! GO FASTER!

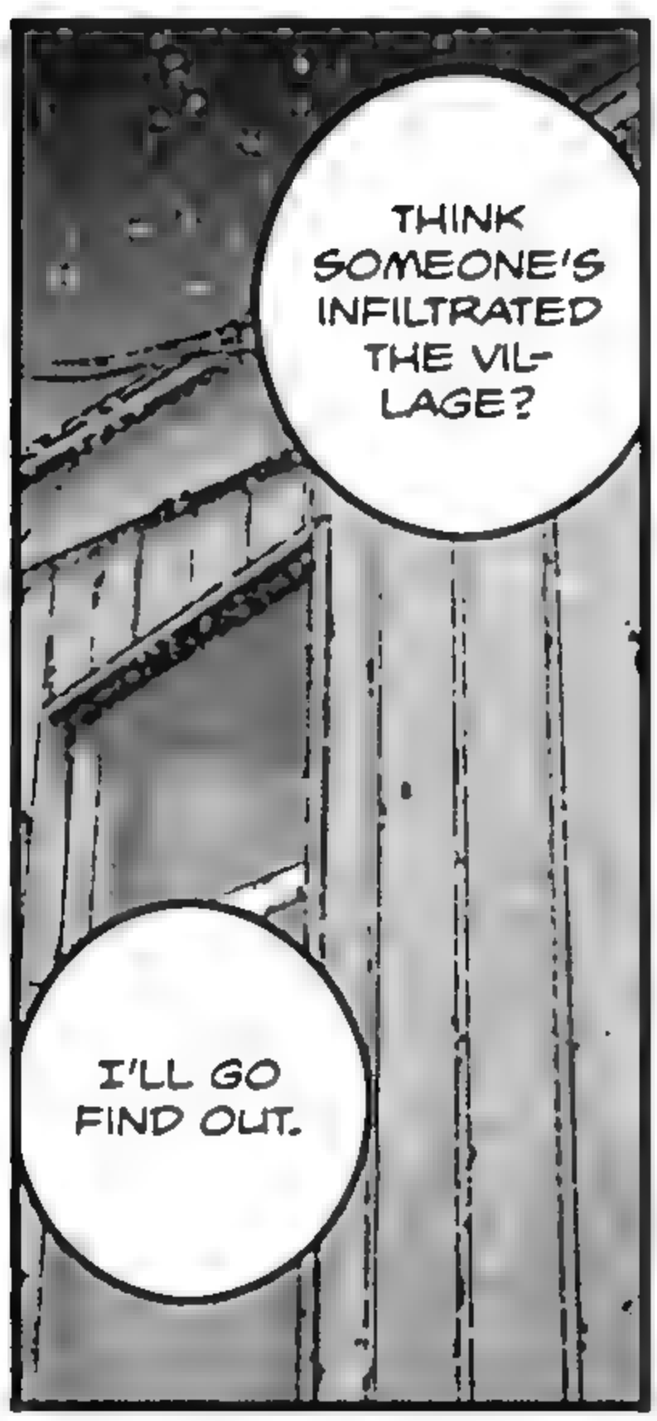
DAH
DIT
DIT
NO WONDER I COULDN'T BREAK—
ATERUI MUST LEAVE THIS ONE OUT AS A DECOY.
ARE YOU ...?!

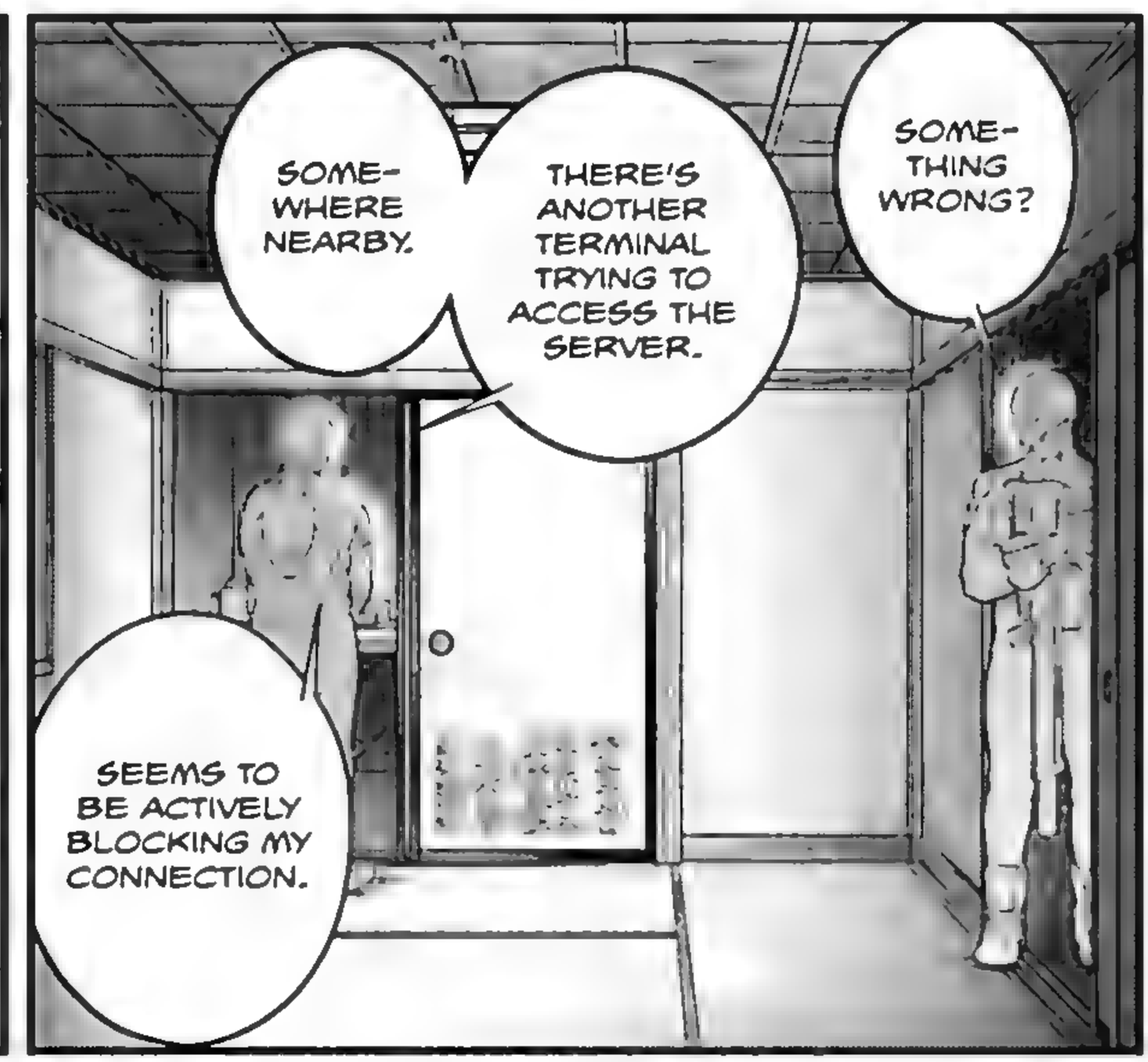

...!
THERE'S ANOTHER ONE. ANOTHER TERMINAL...
CONCURRENT ACCESS
SECURITY
!
...TRYING TO GET INTO THE SERVER...

THEY BEAT US TO IT.

SHIT. THEY WERE HEADED FOR ANOTHER BUILDING.


!

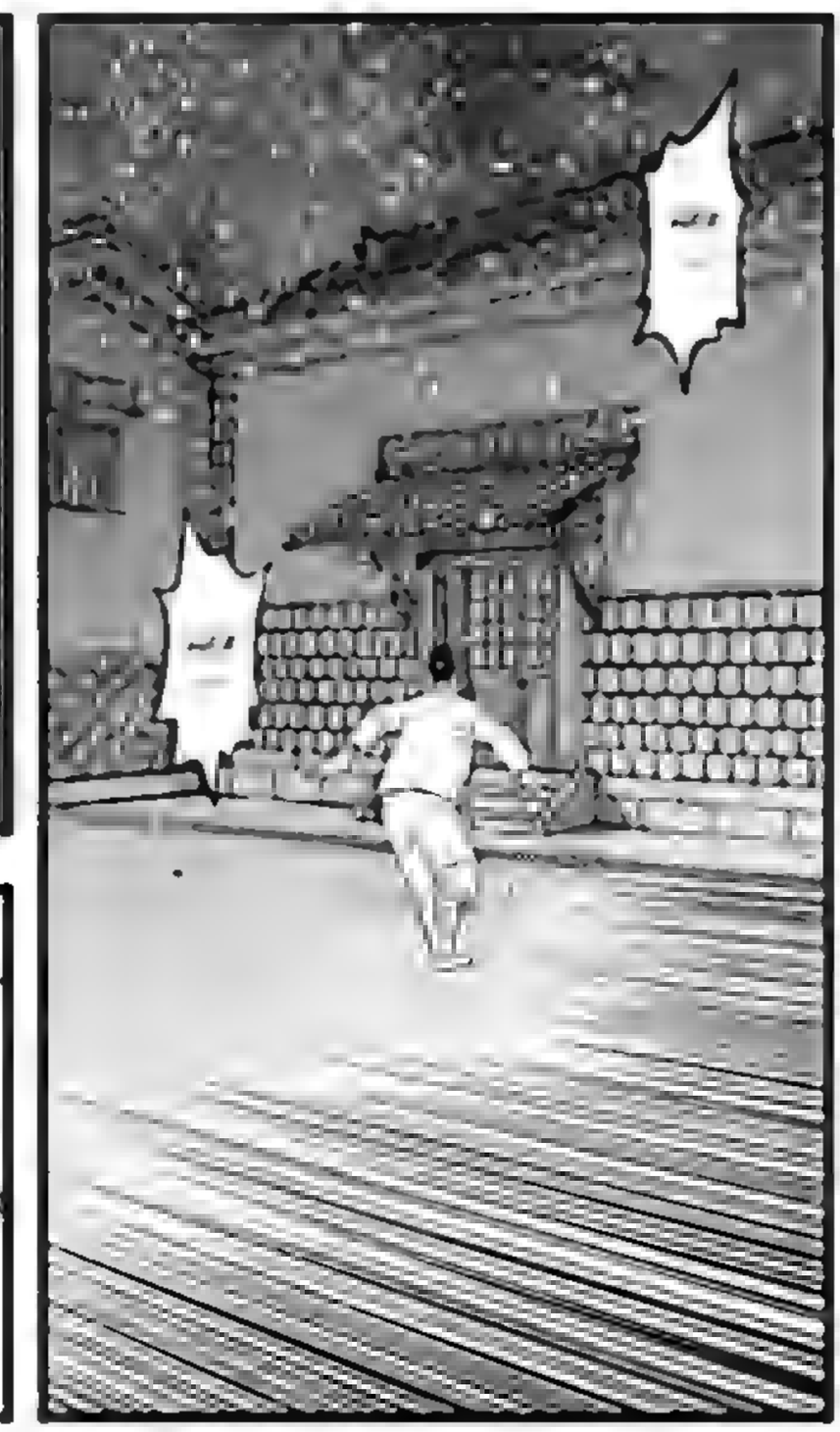

THINK SOMEONE'S INFILTRATED THE VIL-LAGE?
I'LL GO FIND OUT.


SOME-WHERE NEARBY.
THERE'S ANOTHER TERMINAL TRYING TO ACCESS THE SERVER.
SOME-THING WRONG?
SEEMS TO BE ACTIVELY BLOCKING MY CONNECTION.

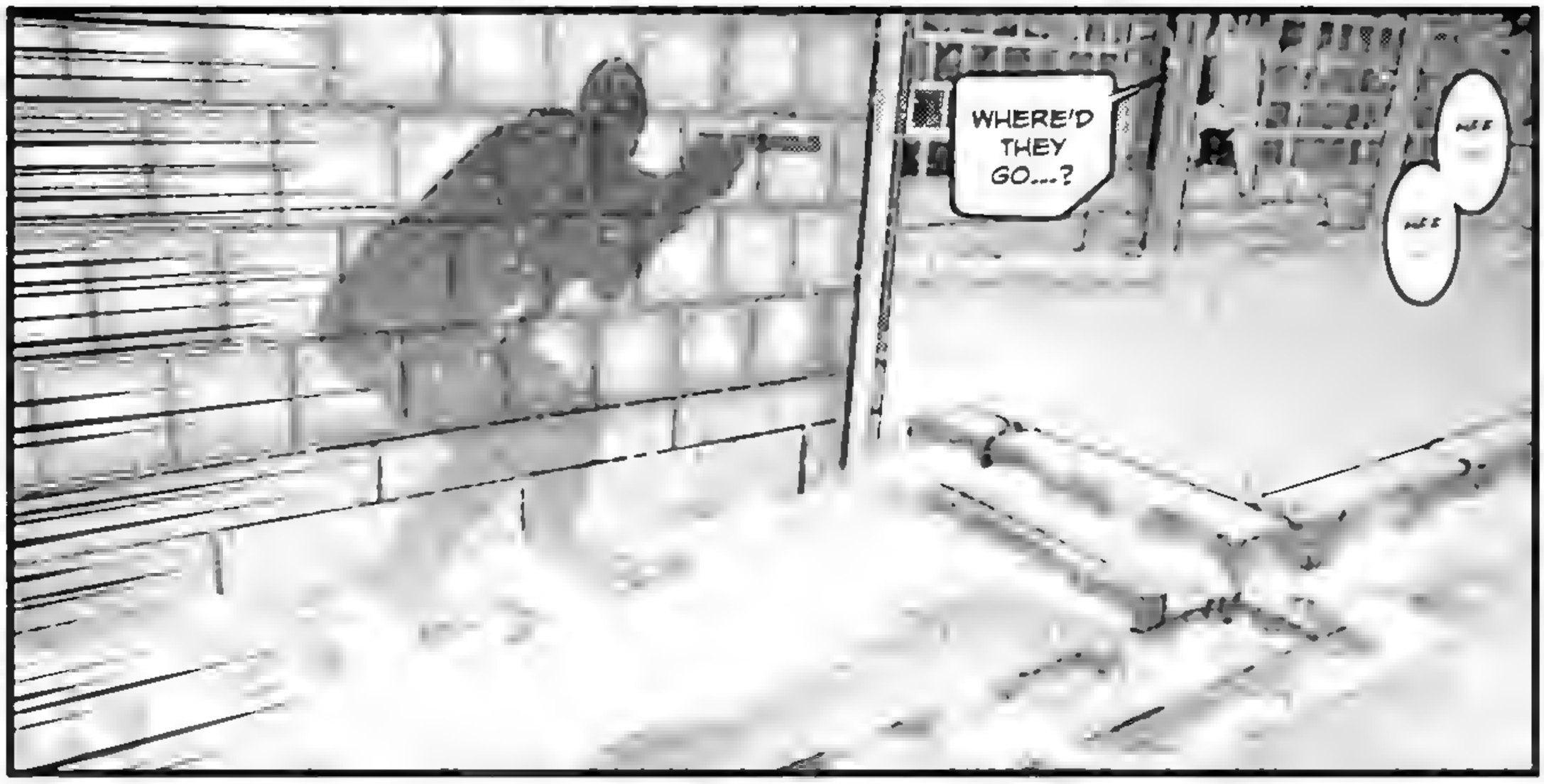
GOTTA ...!
TOGUSA...!

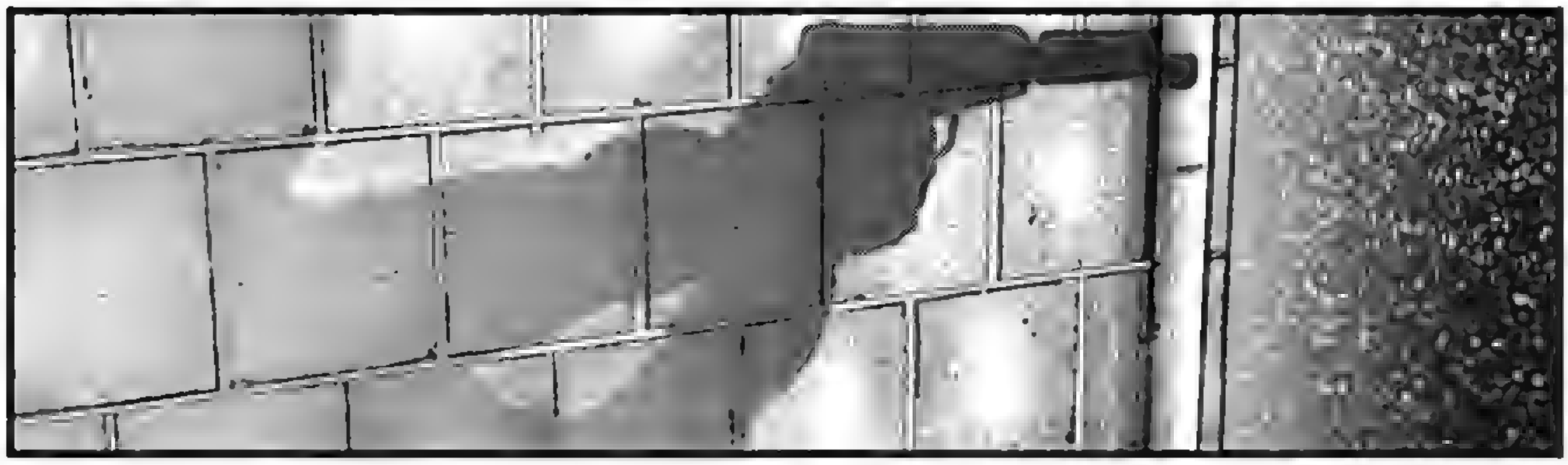
GOTTA WARN TOGUSA!
WHOEVER THESE GUYS ARE, THEY'RE BAD NEWS!!

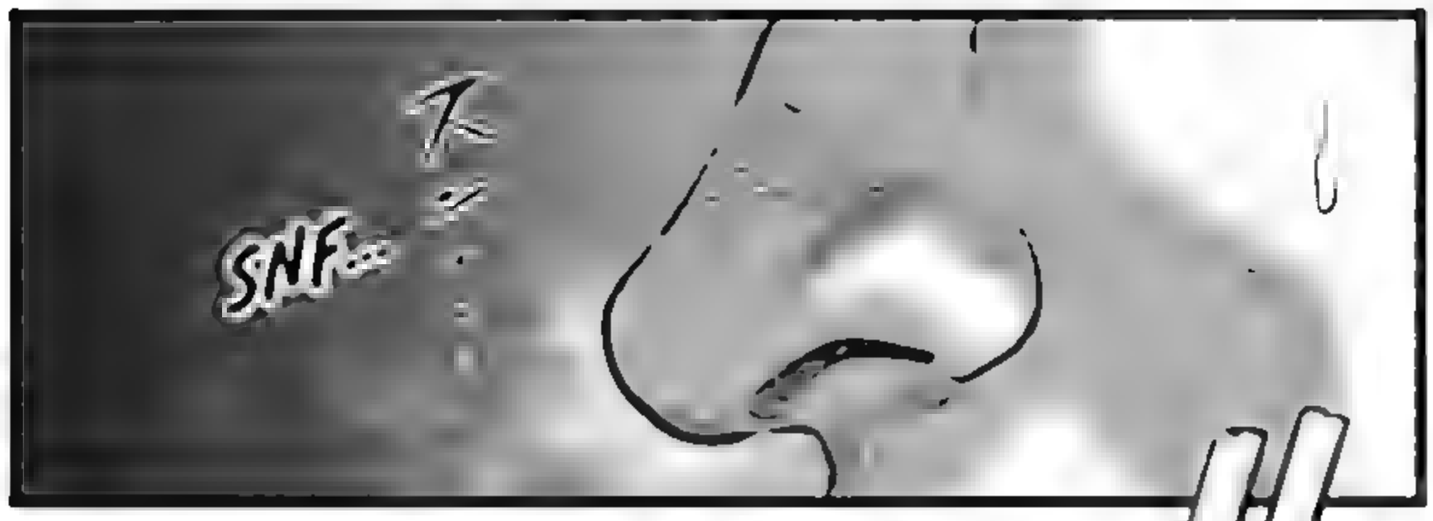
YOU HAVE TO GET OUTTA–
SHF
TOGUSA! INTRUDERS IN THE VILLAGE!



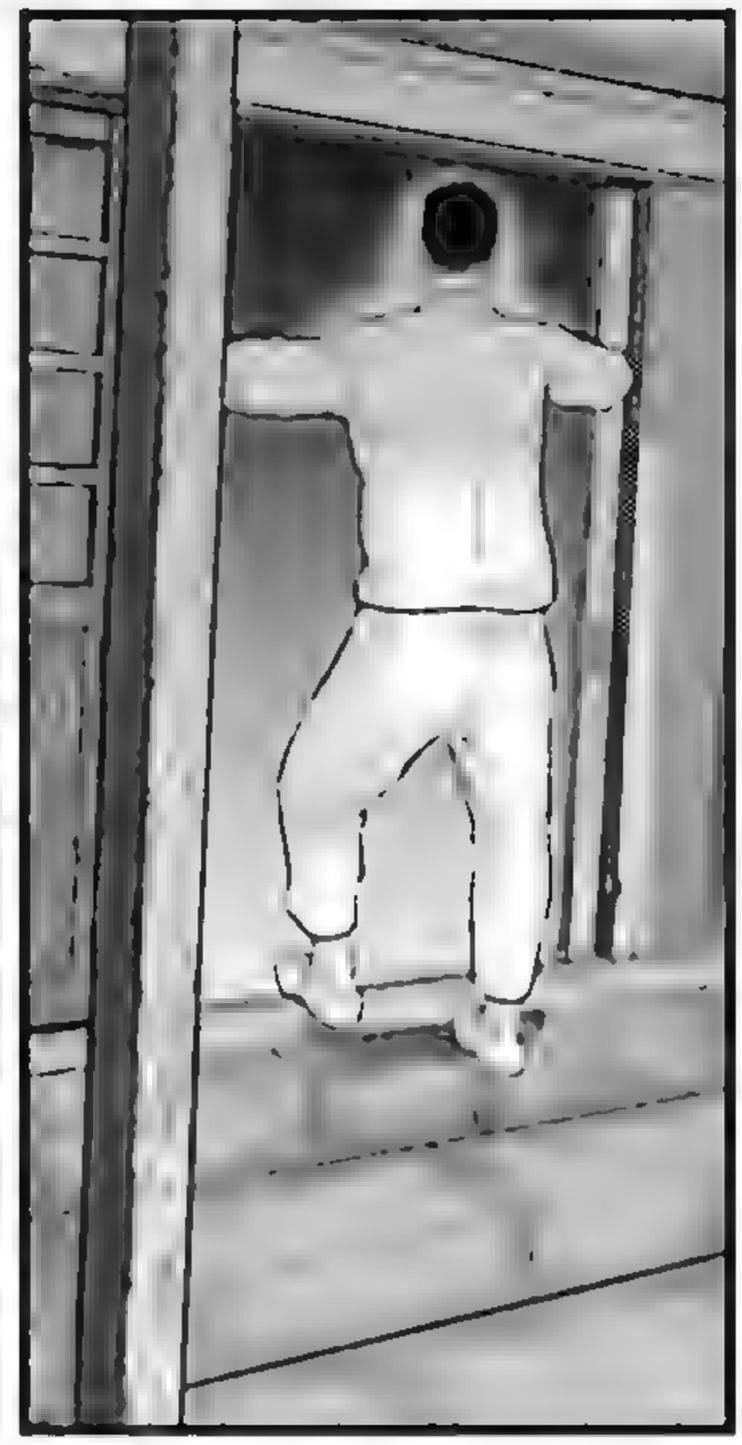
H... HUH...?


WHERE'D THEY GO....?



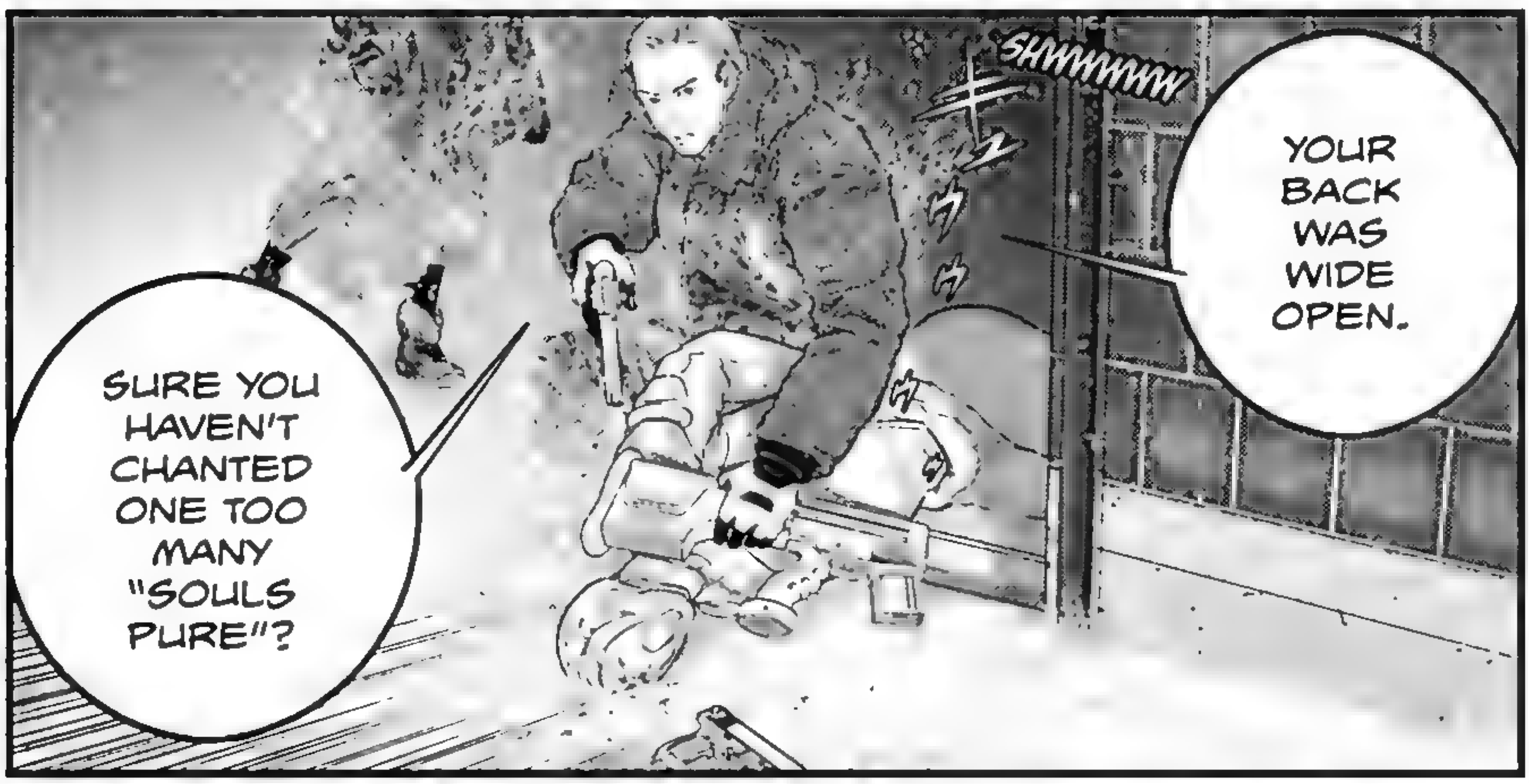

SNF...

BLAM
BLAM
?!



...HUH?

WHUP


SHIIIIIIIII
YOUR BACK WAS WIDE OPEN.
SURE YOU HAVEN'T CHANTED ONE TOO MANY "SOULS PURE"?

TCH!
I KNOW HOW TO SHOOT.
KCHK

TOGUSA !!
HIGH-END COMBAT PROS-THETICS...
JUST LIKE SAITO SAID.
GIVE 'EM TWO TAPS. MAKE SURE THEY STAY DOWN.

SAITO SAYS THEY'RE SOME KINDA TACTICAL SQUAD. NO IDEA WHO THEY'RE WITH.

WHO ARE THESE GUYS, ANYWAY?

BUT I THINK IT'S SAFE TO SAY THEY'RE HERE FOR THE SAME THING WE ARE.

LAST THING WE WANT IS TO BE AROUND WHEN THE WHITE BEAR JOINS THE PARTY.

THE WHOLE VILLAGE WILL HAVE HEARD THE SHOTS.

NO TIME.

GONNA TRY A GHOST-HACK?

WE WITHDRAW FOR NOW.

MY CAMO WAS ENGAGED, BUT THIS ONE STILL NOTICED ME WHEN I CLOSED IN.

THAT'S WHY I SHOT.

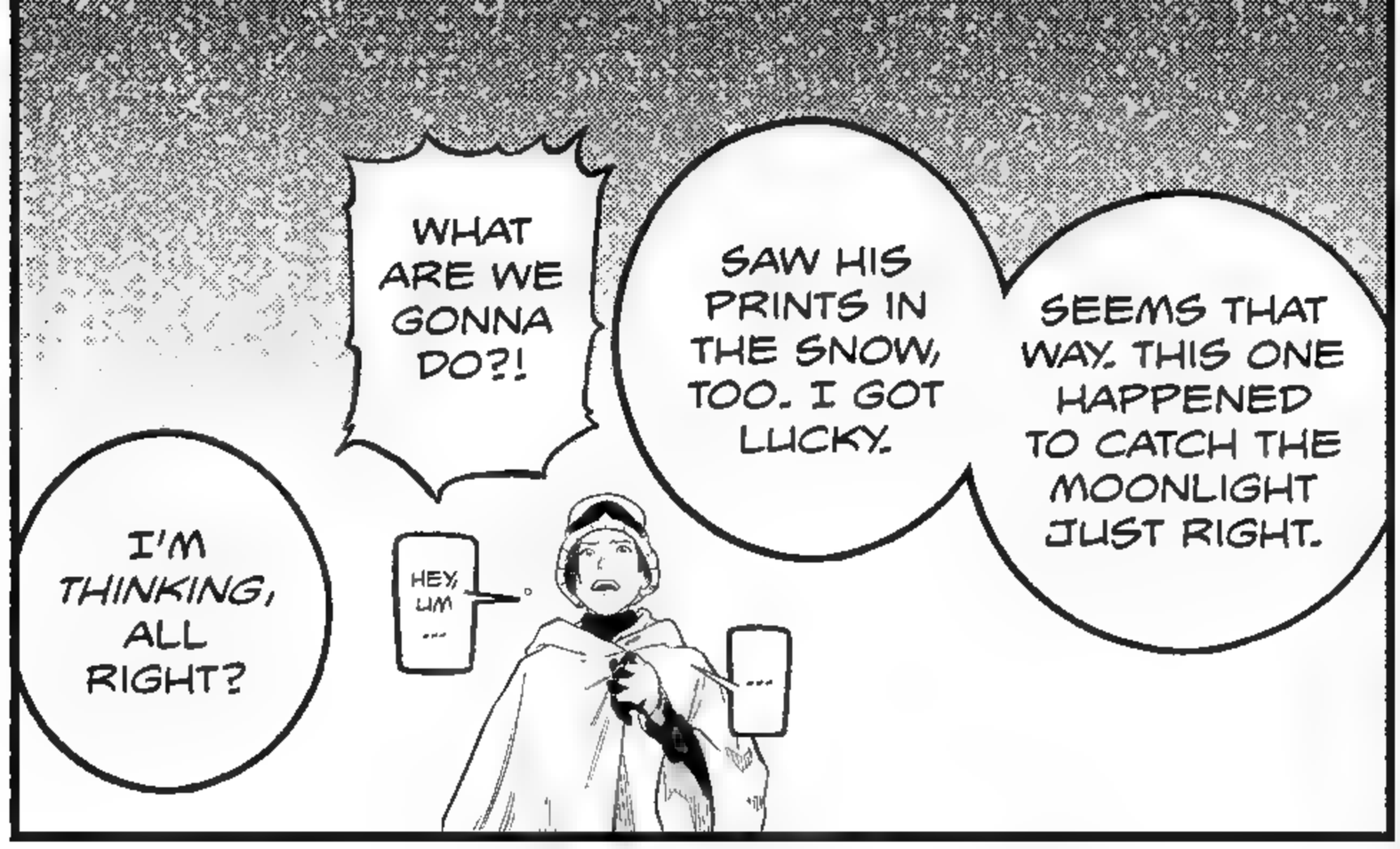
THESE HELMETS OF THEIRS MUST HAVE THER-MOGRAPHIC IMAGING.

NOT AN OPTION.

HOW'D YOU FIGURE THAT OUT?!

HM?

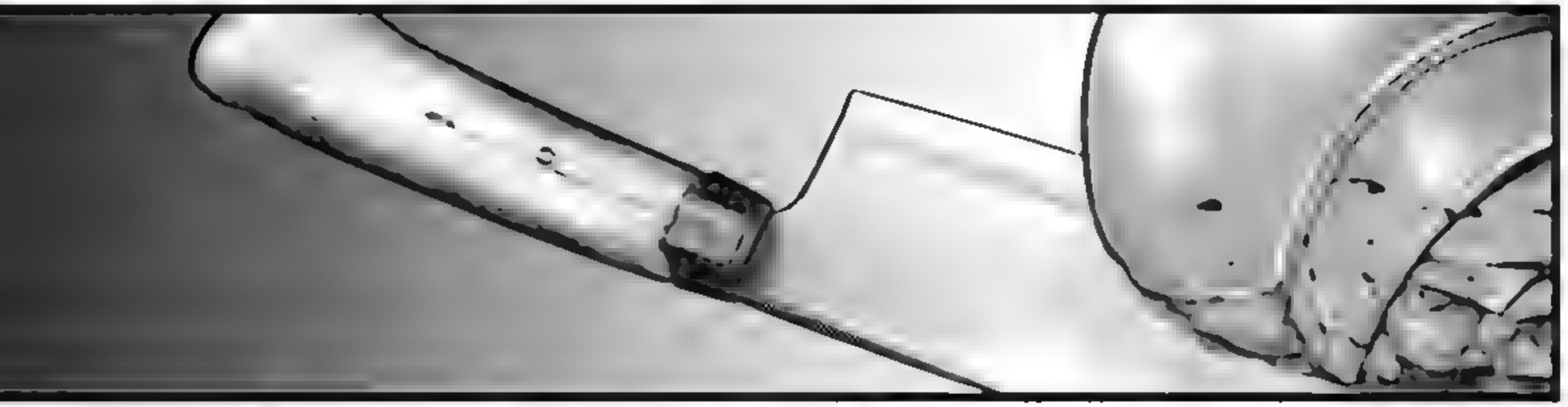
WHY NOT WAIT IT OUT WITH THE ACTIVE CAMO—

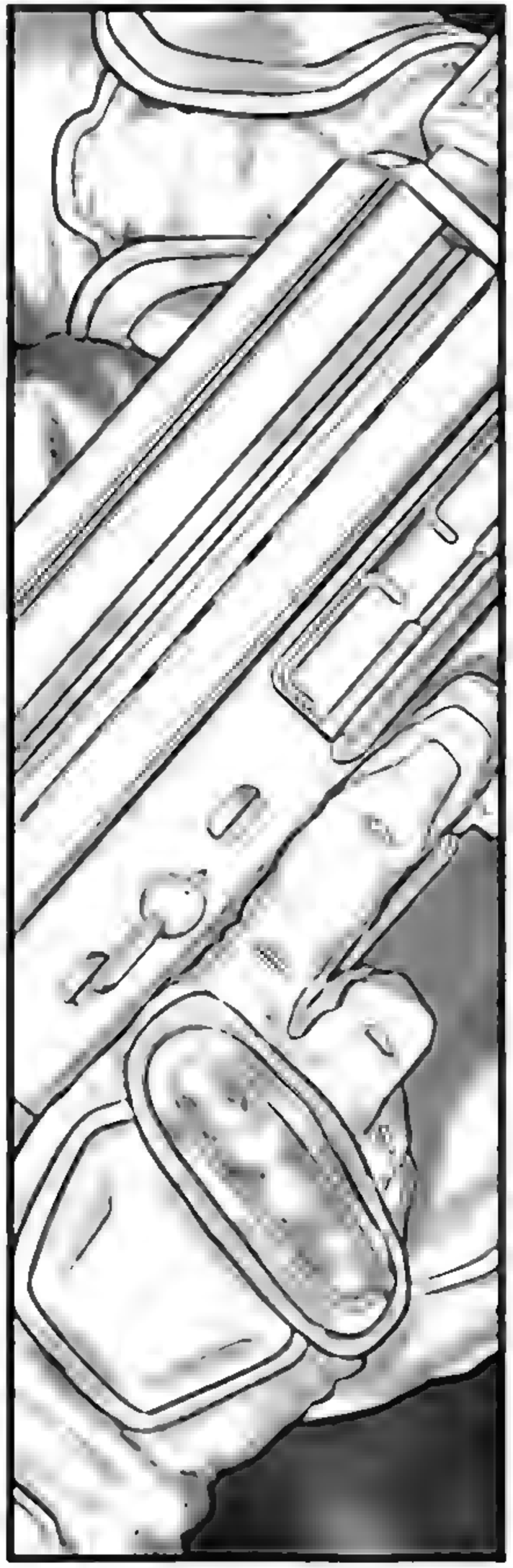

WHAT ARE WE GONNA DO?!
SAW HIS PRINTS IN THE SNOW, TOO. I GOT LUCKY.
SEEMS THAT WAY. THIS ONE HAPPENED TO CATCH THE MOONLIGHT JUST RIGHT.
I'M THINKING, ALL RIGHT?
HEY, UM ...
...

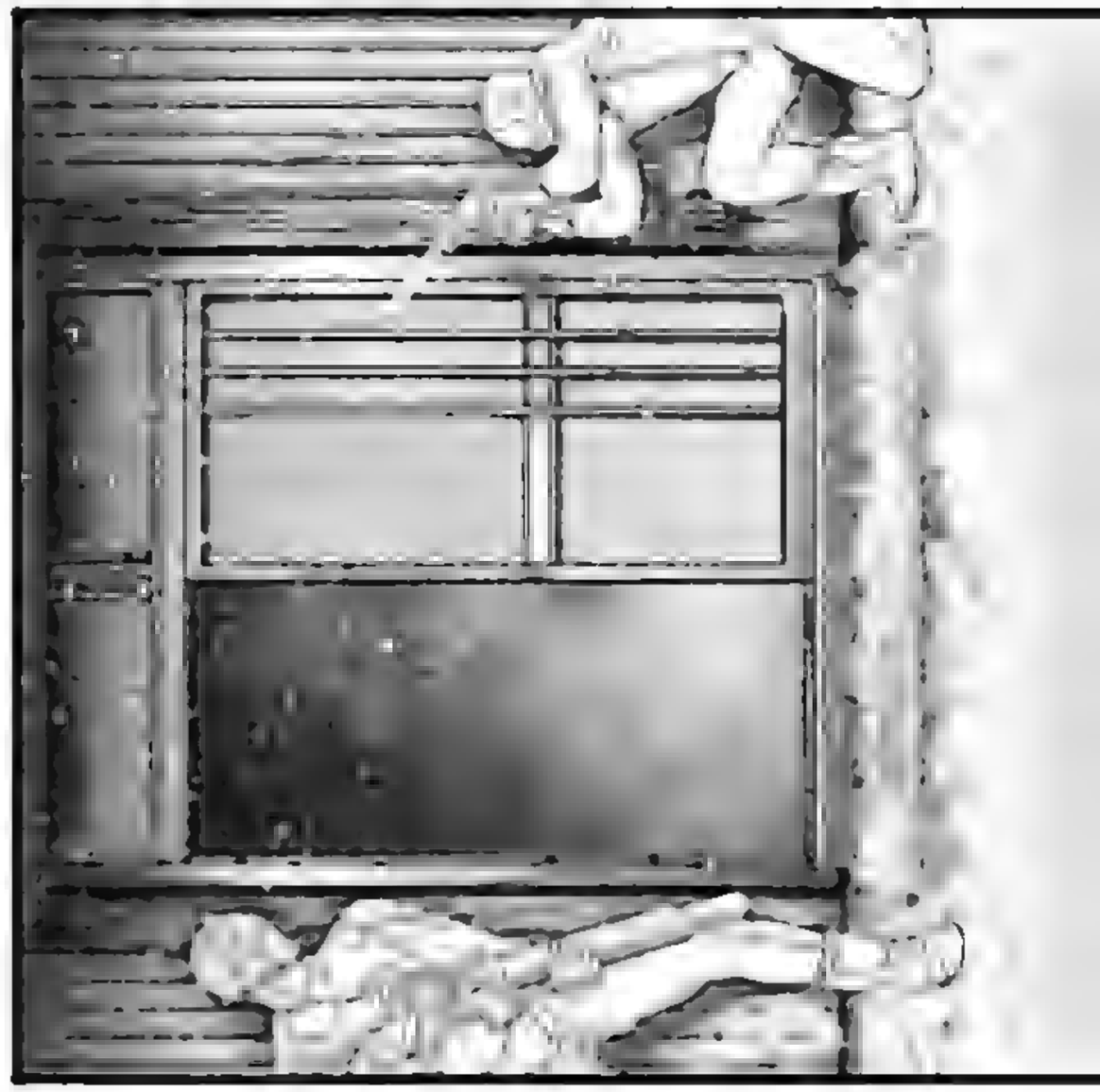
GREAT.
SO THEY CAN SEE US...
...BUT WE CAN'T SEE THEM, HUH?

THE INVISIBLE ENEMIES YOU'RE TALKING ABOUT. I THINK I CAN SPOT THEM!
SAY WHAT ?!
UM...! I THINK I MIGHT BE ABLE TO SEE THEM...!

I CAN WATCH FOR THEIR AURAS.
THE WAY THEY ARE NOW, I CAN SEE THEM.
THESE GUYS ARE PREPARED TO KILL. THEIR AURAS ARE FULL OF MALICE.
I'LL FIND THEM FOR US.
THERM-OPTIC CAMO BE DAMNED.







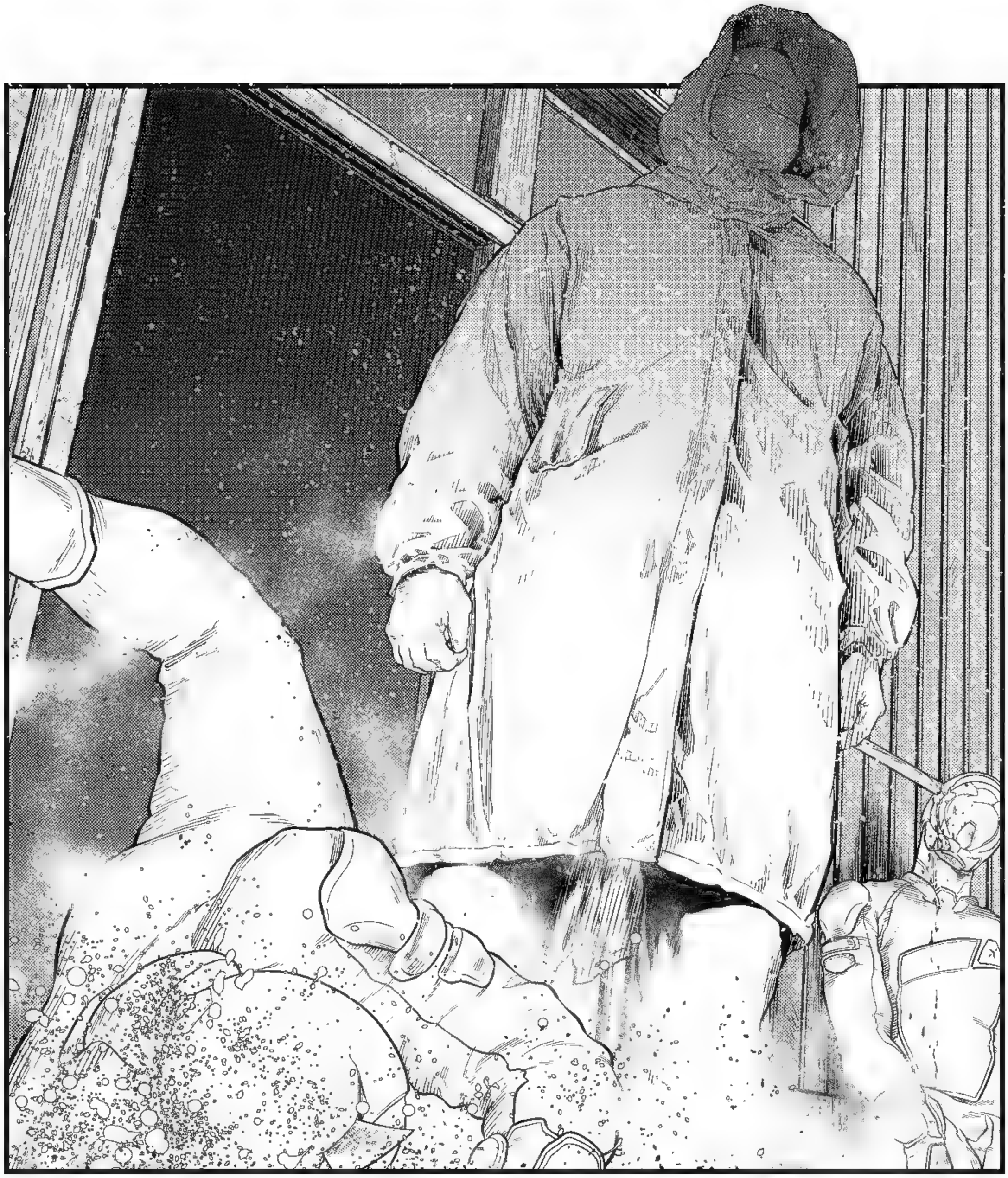
?!

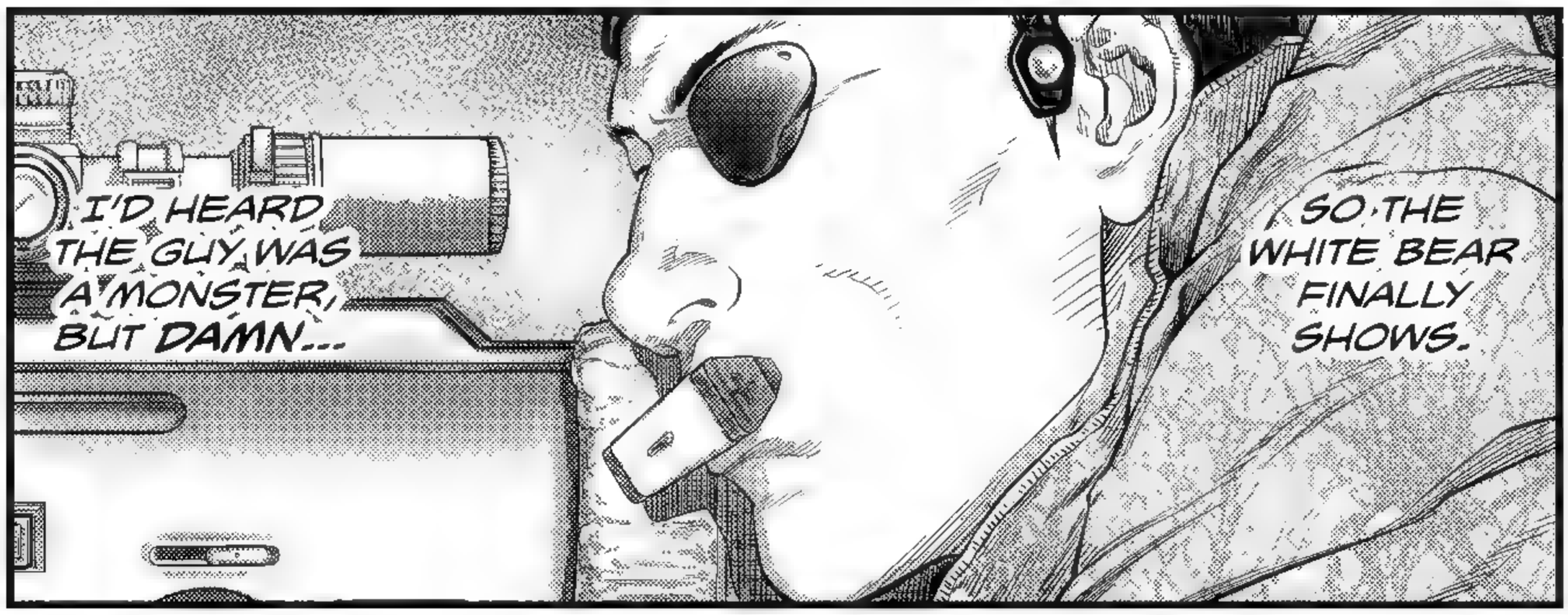
SHRKK

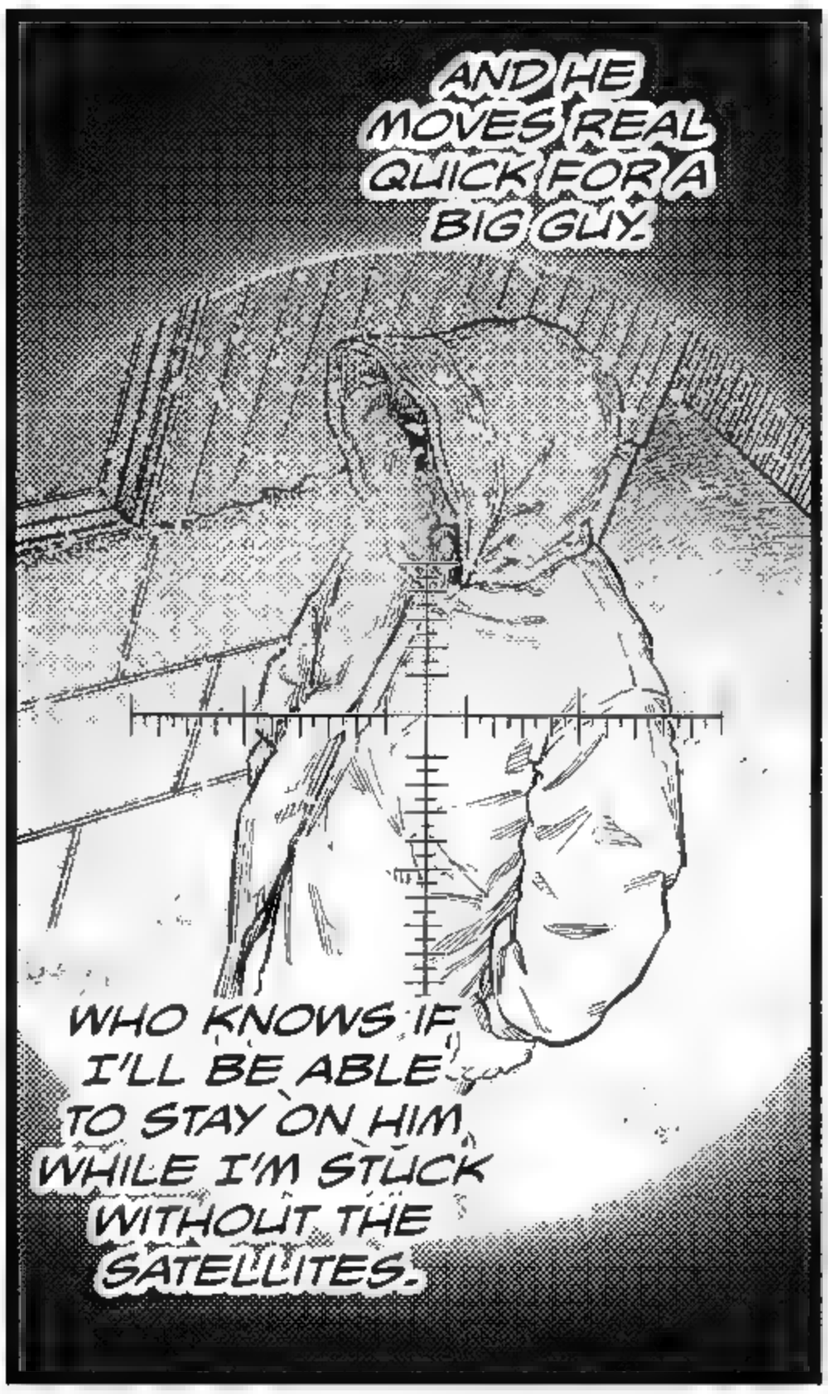
WHACK

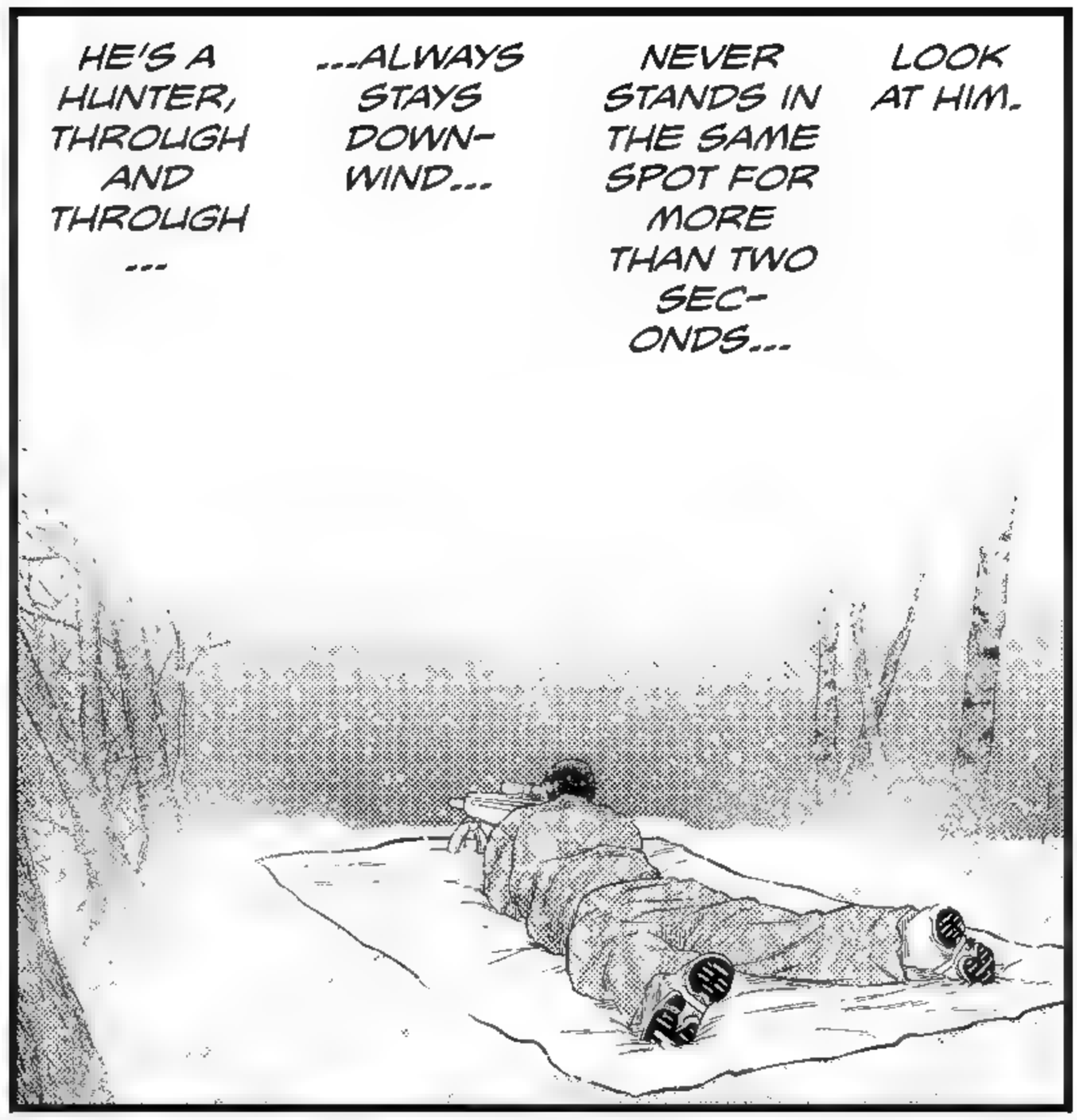
SHNK

SHRK

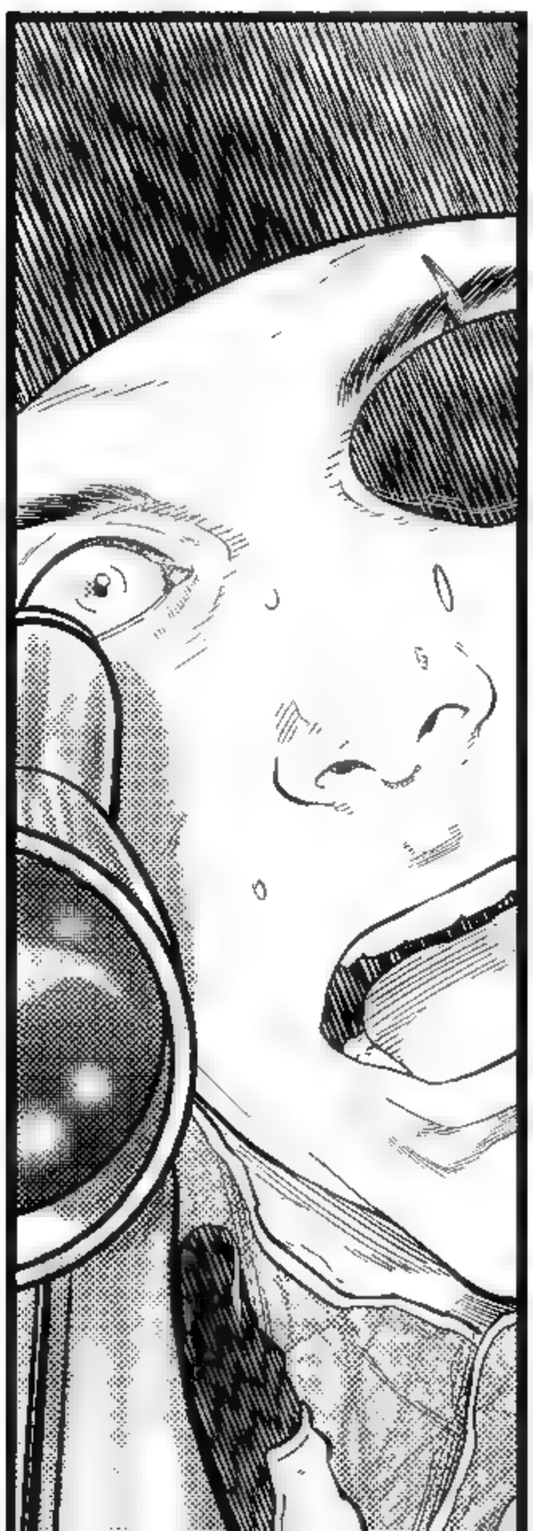



I'D HEARD THE GUY WAS A MONSTER, BUT DAMN...
SO THE WHITE BEAR FINALLY SHOWS.

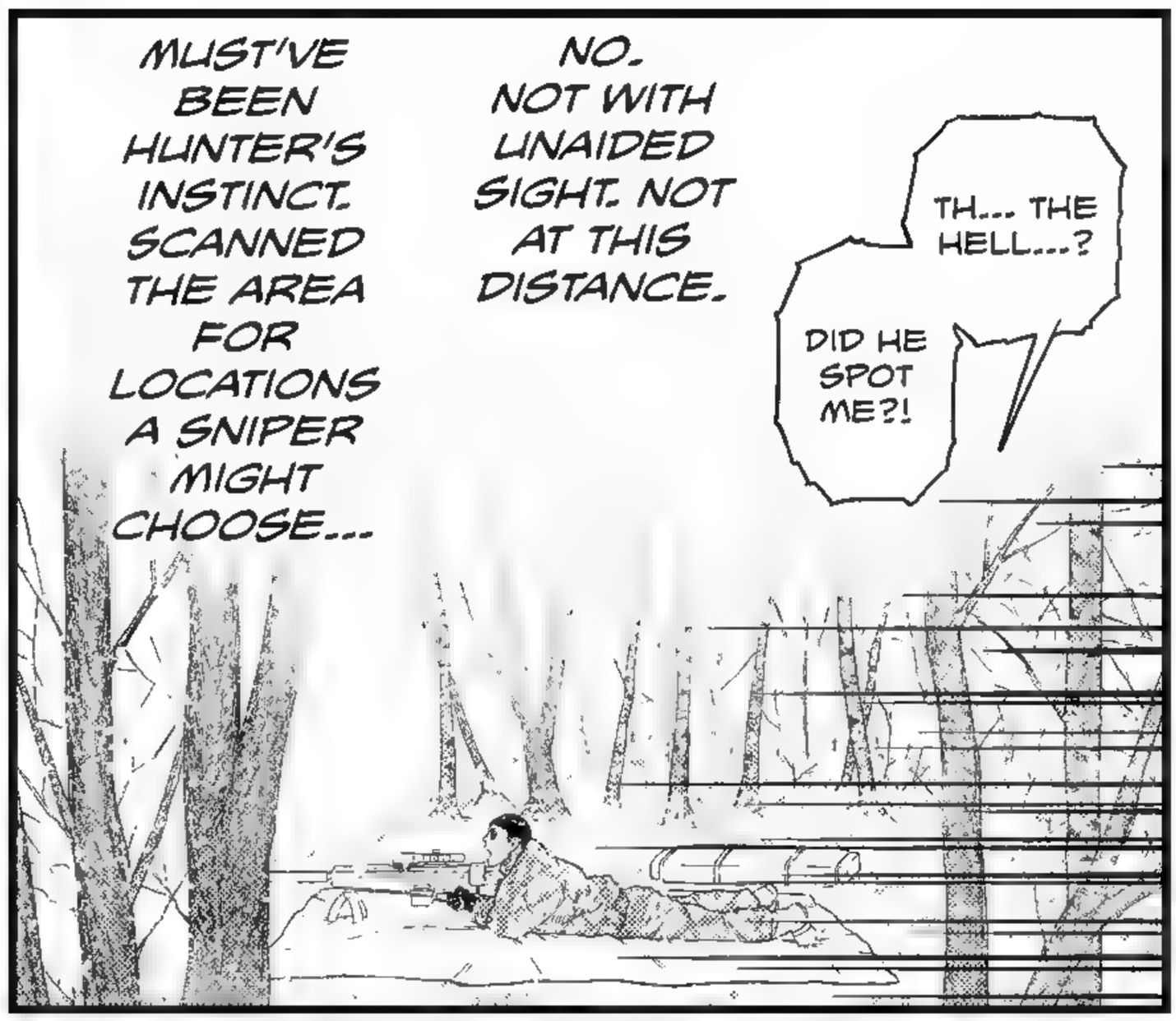

AND HE MOVES REAL QUICK FOR A BIG GUY.
WHO KNOWS IF I'LL BE ABLE TO STAY ON HIM WHILE I'M STUCK WITHOUT THE SATELLITES.

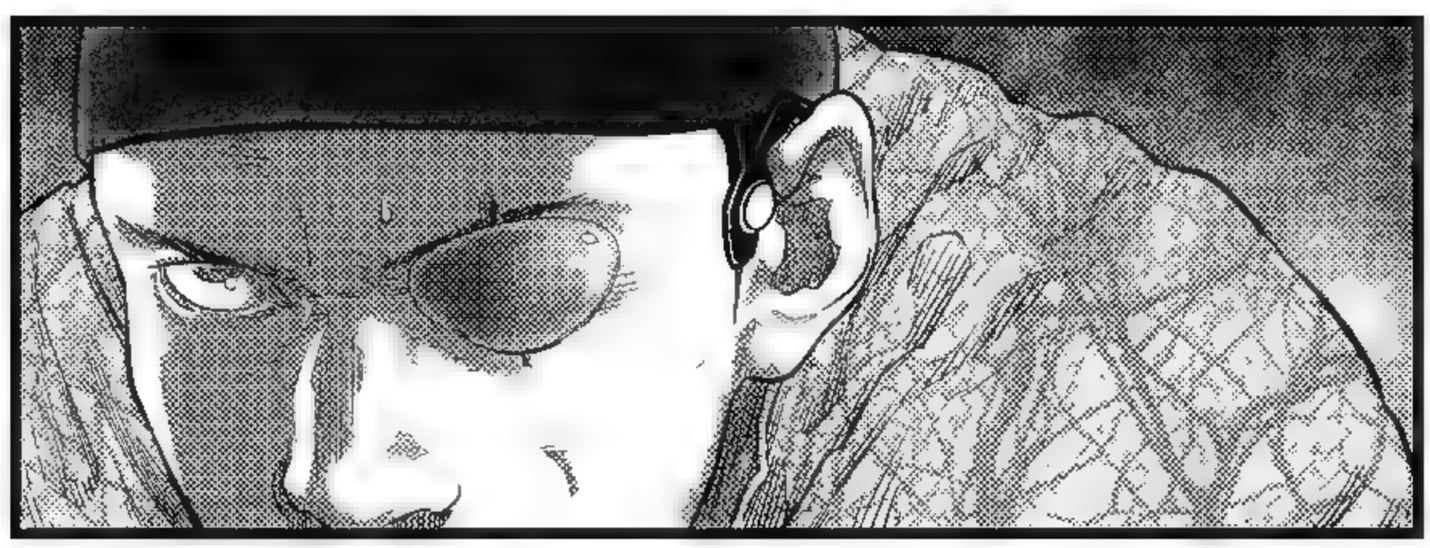

HE'S A HUNTER, THROUGH AND THROUGH ...
...ALWAYS STAYS DOWN-WIND...
NEVER STANDS IN THE SAME SPOT FOR MORE THAN TWO SEC-ONDS...
LOOK AT HIM.

TKK...
RIGHT HERE AND NOW.
I BETTER SETTLE THIS.

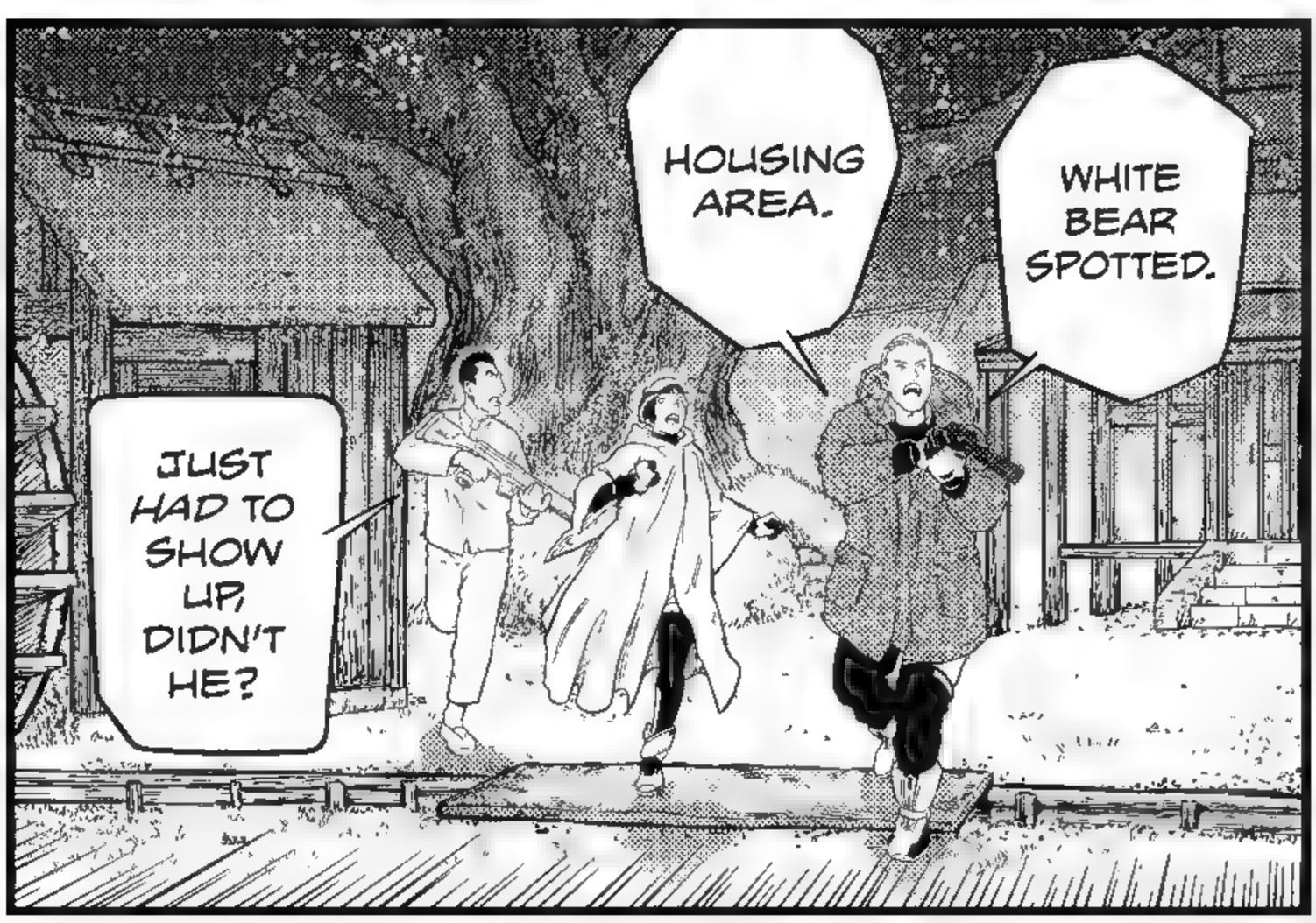


TOGUSA...
...GET OUT OF THERE. NOW.
WE DON'T STAND A CHANCE AGAINST HIM OUT HERE IN THE SNOW.


MUST'VE BEEN HUNTER'S INSTINCT. SCANNED THE AREA FOR LOCATIONS A SNIPER MIGHT CHOOSE...
NO. NOT WITH UNAIDED SIGHT. NOT AT THIS DISTANCE.
TH... THE HELL...?
DID HE SPOT ME?!



DO NOT ENGAGE.


JUST HAD TO SHOW UP, DIDN'T HE?
HOUSING AREA.
WHITE BEAR SPOTTED.

THE HELL'D HE DO TO RATTLE SAITO THIS BAD...?

OUR ROUTE OUTTA HERE IS AT THE BACK!
KEEP MOVING!
ONCE WE HIT THE TRAIL, WE'RE HOME FREE.
I AM!
DASH

LUCKY FOR US, WE'LL BE LONG GONE...
...BEFORE HE CAN MAKE IT UP HERE.

STOP !!
C'MON! LET'S GET–
?!
THIS'LL TAKE US DOWN THE MOUNTAIN.

TUG
AHH!

THIS IS THE SAME AURA THAT WAS COMING FROM—
I FEEL IT. THE MALICE. SOMEBODY'S STARING RIGHT AT US...

AND HE'S TOO FAR FOR ME TO SMELL HIM OUT.
NOTHING. BASTARD'S PROBABLY GOT CAMO ENGAGED.
ANYTHING FROM YOUR POSITION, AZUMA?

TOGUSA !!

YOU'RE GONNA USE YOURSELF AS BAIT?!
GET A LOCK ON HIS POSITION.
I'LL MAKE A RUN FOR OUR EXIT. WATCH FOR THE MUZZLE FLASH.
DON'T WORRY ABOUT ME. I'M NOT TRYING TO DIE OR ANYTHING.
YOU'RE INSANE.

I SEE ONE! AN AURA *DRIPPING* WITH MALICE!

OVER THERE! BEHIND THE MEMORIAL STONE!

?!

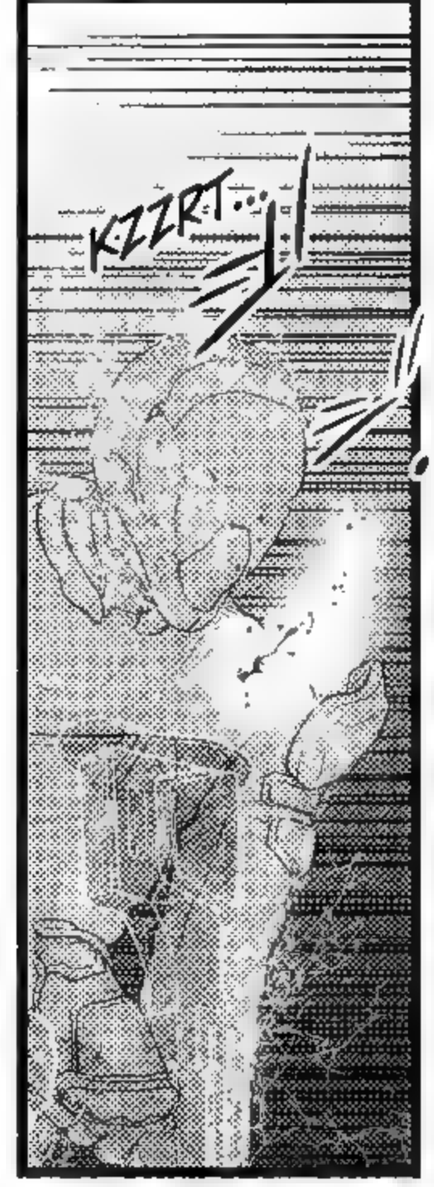
IT JUTS OUT ABOUT 30 CENTIMETERS FROM THE RIGHT SIDE. PROBABLY HIS LEFT SHOULDER OR—

YOU'VE SPOTTED HIM?!

FWIP

I PROMISE IT'S TRUE! I CAN SEE HIM!

BLAM BLAM


KZZRT...

NGH!

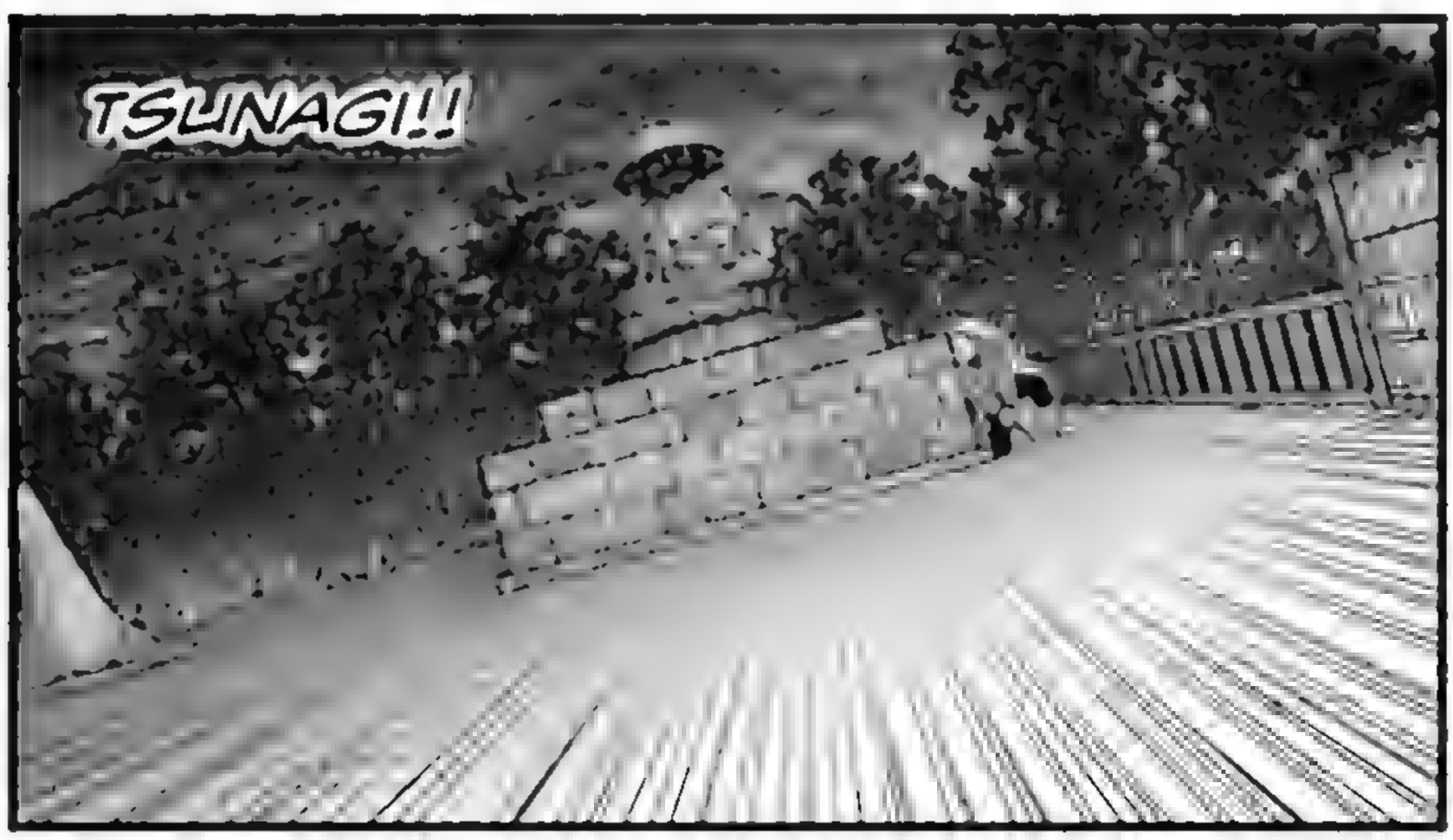
KTHIK
BZZZFX

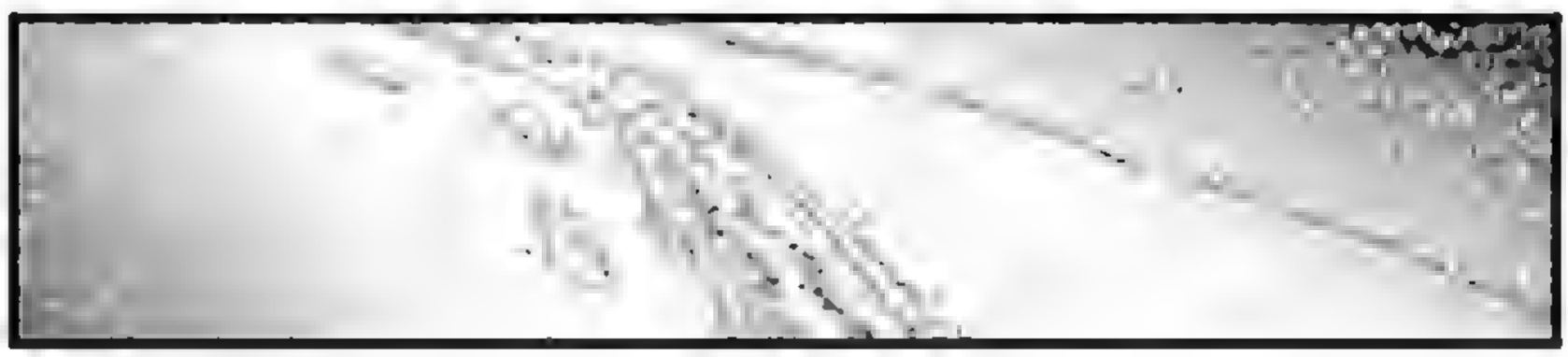
BLAM
BLAM
WE GOT HIM!

BAM
BAM BAM
BAM
GUH!

TSUNAGI! GET DOWN!
?!
PFF
PFF
PFF
PFF

YOU'RE RIGHT IN HIS SIGHTS!
BUP
BUP
BUP
BUP
BUP
BUP


TSUNAGI!!

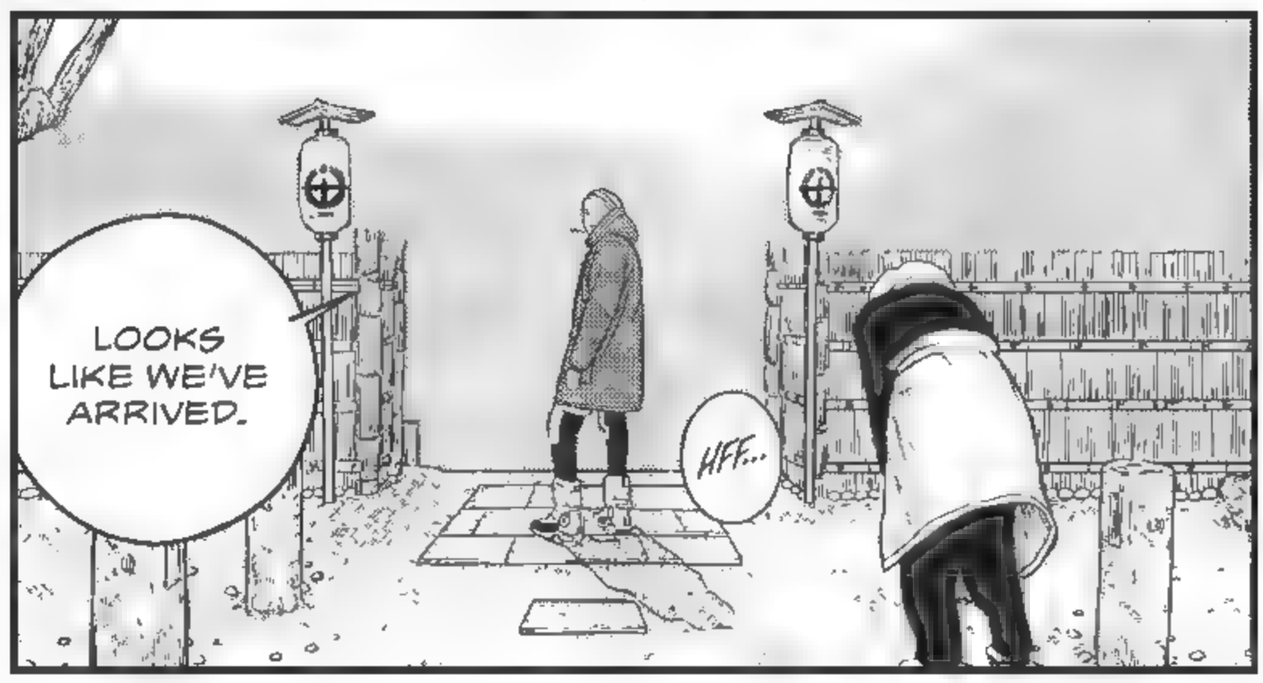


SKRRT...
SKKKRRT...

Translation Notes

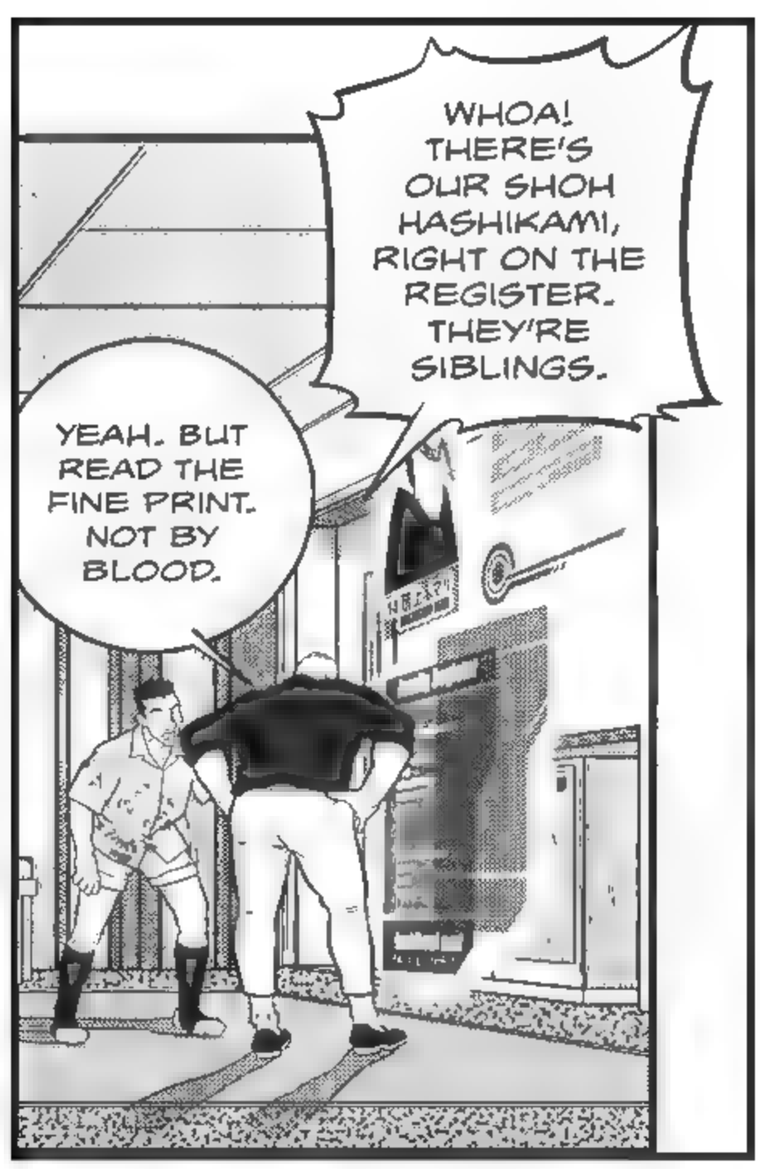
50, Aterui
"Aterui" is the name of a famous military and political leader of the Isawa, a clan among the Emishi, who were an ethnic group based in northern Japan until the 9th century CE. They were forcibly assimilated into the Yamato imperial state during their efforts to unify the main island of what is now Japan (Honshu) during the 8th and 9th centuries CE. That clan, along with many peoples assimilated into the centralized Yamato empire from the northern, rural areas over the archipelago's history, have long been associated with mystical practices and liminal, pre-modern spaces.

57, Image on lanterns
The cross-like symbol on the lanterns is the *kanji* character for the number ten (pronounced "*ju*" or "*to*"), which is also in the first part of the name for the area in which the community is located, Towada.

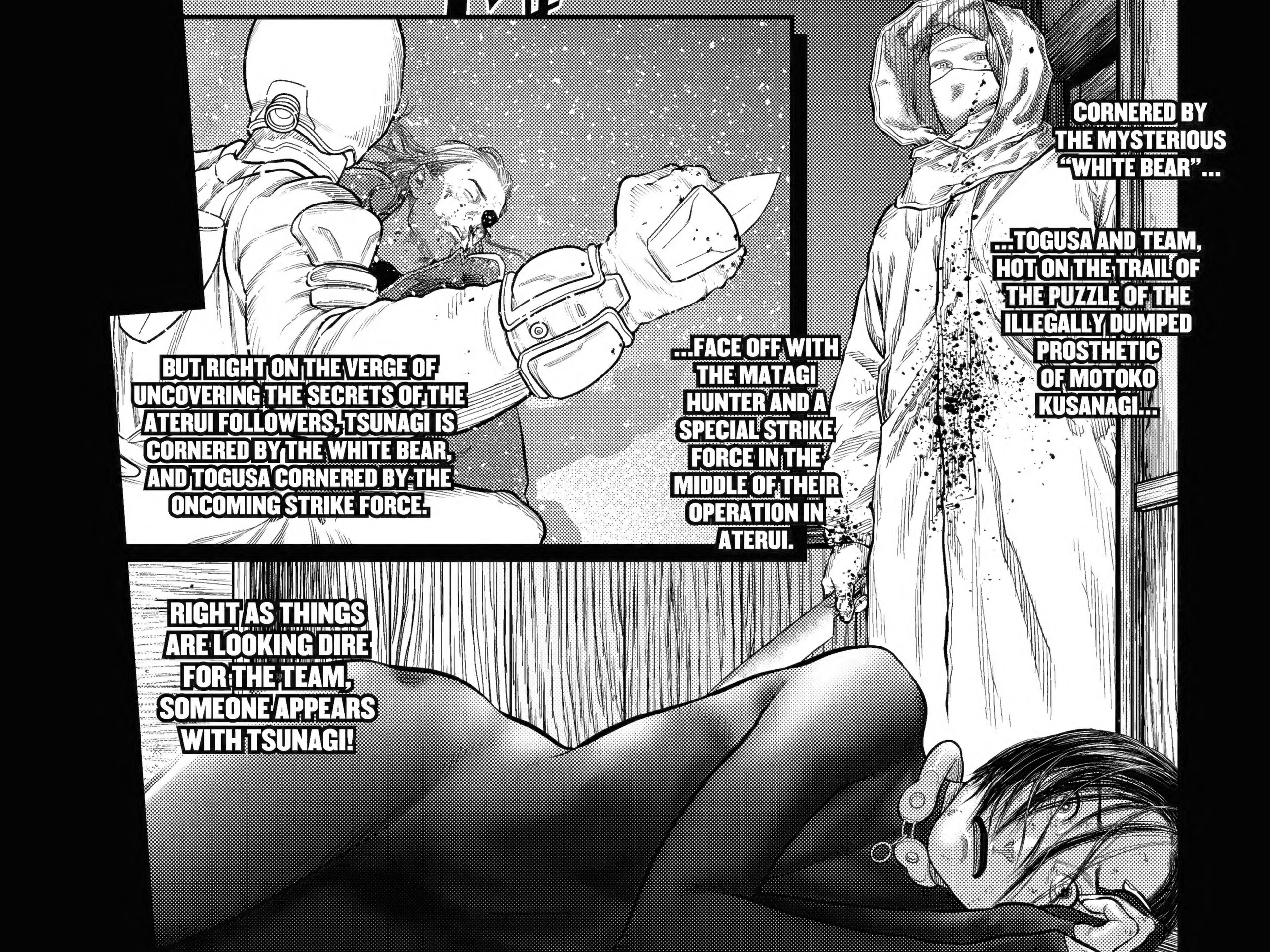


68, *Jappa-jiru* hotpot
Jappa-jiru means "fish broth" in the Aomori dialect, an area in northwestern Japan.

78, Screen calligraphy
The calligraphy on the right half of the screens are lines from a Zen Buddhist priest named Getsuan (1326 - 1389), cited in a famous text called "A Mirror to the Flowers" about the form of traditional dramatic Japanese theater called *noh* by Zeami (1363 - 1443). The lines read from right to left: "Life and death come and go, we're mere puppets on a stage, and when the strings are cut, we fall in broken piles." The left half of the screens show a famous phrase from an ancient text in Buddhism, which describe Buddhas and bodhisattvas that "remove suffering and bestow bliss."



110, Family register
In Japan, an individual's legal status is registered by the government according to their family. This is called the "register system" (*koseki seido*), and each family has a "registry" with the local government, which records births, deaths, marriages, divorces and permanent residence.


BUT RIGHT ON THE VERGE OF UNCOVERING THE SECRETS OF THE ATERUI FOLLOWERS, TSUNAGI IS CORNERED BY THE WHITE BEAR, AND TOGUSA CORNERED BY THE ONCOMING STRIKE FORCE.
...FACE OFF WITH THE MATAGI HUNTER AND A SPECIAL STRIKE FORCE IN THE MIDDLE OF THEIR OPERATION IN ATERUI.
CORNERED BY THE MYSTERIOUS "WHITE BEAR"...
...TOGUSA AND TEAM, HOT ON THE TRAIL OF THE PUZZLE OF THE ILLEGALLY DUMPED PROSTHETIC OF MOTOKO KUSANAGI...
RIGHT AS THINGS ARE LOOKING DIRE FOR THE TEAM, SOMEONE APPEARS WITH TSUNAGI!

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The Ghost in the Shell: The Human Algorithm 1

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